CORPUS CHRISTI BOOKS.

GOD'S WONDER BOOK

MARIE St. S. ELLERKER, O.S.D.

GOD'S WONDER BOOK

By the same Author.

MOUNTAINS OF HELP.
Illustrated.

MASTER, WHERE DWELLEST THOU?
Illustrated.

BEHOLD THE LAMB! ABOUT THE HOLY MASS.
Illustrated.

A WREATH OF FEASTS FOR THE LITTLE ONES.
Illustrated.

THE STORY OF ST. DOMINIC.
Told to Young People. Illustrated.

GOD'S WONDER BOOK

BY

MARIE ST. S. ELLERKER, O.S.D.

WITH PREFACE BY

VERY REV. VINCENT McNABB, O.P.

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PREFACE

A GENIUS is said to be "a man or woman who knows something about almost everything, and almost everything about something." But if any boys or girls became acquainted with God's Wonder Book, the Missal, they would know almost everything about almost everything!

How easy it would be to learn if we loved the Book of the Mass! Indeed, how hard it would be not to learn, if only we loved "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." It is strange to think that if we really loved Jesus we should find a delight in learning, say, geography. How much geography, and not of the dry sort, is in the feast of the Transfiguration or of St. Ambrose. What a fine history hunt is provided by the feast of St. Augustine, St. Patrick, or St. Rose of Lima. As for languages,

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almost our smallest children at school know a little Latin, Greek, and even Hebrew!

The writer of this book loves two things, and therefore has given us a book, easy to open and hard to close—she loves children, and she loves the Child Jesus. Both they and He will thank her for "God's Wonder Book."

VINCENT M'NABB, O.P.

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GOD'S WONDER BOOK

CHAPTER I

GOD'S WONDER BOOK

YOU have all seen the deacon or server accompanying the priest to the altar carrying the large Mass book which is called the Missal, have you not? And have you not often wished that you could read your Mass from it like the priest? How to do this is what you and I are going to find out together.

You will want a Missal of your own, but not quite so large as the priest's, and I think, too, you would rather it was not all in Latin. You can get the kind you will want at the Catholic repository in your town if you ask for a "Missal for the Laity."

I told you once my own thoughts when for the first time a Missal was placed in my hands. To me it was, and is, God's Wonder Book. Out of it the priest reads the prayers of Holy Mass, and in it are those most powerful, most wonderful words which change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, and give us Jesus on the altar as our Emmanuel —our God with us. How could any Catholic help being thrilled at the thought of having a

Missal of his own, and knowing how to use it? Can you think of any better way of hearing Holy Mass, than following word by word the priest, whose lips are being used by Jesus, the great invisible Priest, who says every Mass?

I don't want you to get a wrong or a narrow idea. Every prayer is good to say at Holy Mass. We must never think our way is the only way; that would be dreadful. So although I want to help you to love your Missal, to love to use the Church's very own prayers during Mass, you must never forget that it is joining in the great Act of Sacrifice that matters. If the person next you saying her beads not too quietly is doing this better than you, then her prayer is giving more glory to God than yours, even if you read your whole Mass in Latin, and do not miss a single prayer. I expect a story will help you to understand how not to hear Mass:

A certain little boy, whom we will call Jack, wanted to pray well on a certain special occasion, but a very queer idea of what praying well meant had got into his curly head. He thought he would read as many prayers as he could during Mass! When it was over he rushed home and announced: "I have read the Ordinary of the Mass through eight times."

Now let us take our Missal and examine it. I think it will help to make the finding of our places easier and simpler if we make a list, showing the order in which the parts of the Mass come:

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The Sign of the Cross, The Psalm and *Confiteor*, The Introit, *Kyrie* and *Gloria*, Collects. Epistle, Gradual and Alleluia or Tract, Gospel, Creed. The Offering of the Bread and Wine, Lavabo, Secret Prayers, Preface. Prayers for the Living, Consecration and Elevation, Prayers following the Consecration, including Prayer for the Dead. Our Father, Lamb of God, Lord, I am not worthy, Priest's Communion. Communion, Post-Communion, Priest's blessing, Last Gospel.

In the ages of faith, even tiny children were not unfamiliar with the inside of a Missal. I have just read this little story in a life of St. Hugh of Lincoln. Speaking of St. Hugh's chaplain, the writer says:

"This priest tells us how he had the honour of giving a first lesson to one of the nephews of the Saint. The pupil, who was just seven years old, and whose name was John, had accompanied his uncle to Belley. It was in the cathedral of that town, and upon the altar dedicated to St. John the Baptist, that a Missal was laid open, from which the little child was to learn to read. With this beautiful ceremony, he received his first lesson."

The Corpus Christi books are written in a Dominican parish, and a great many readers of them attend Dominican churches. The priests of the Order of St. Dominic have a rite of their own for Mass, and I will include in each chapter a little summary of the chief differences between this rite and that, which

is seen in churches not served by the Order of Preachers, as St. Dominic's sons are called.

This is the difference in the order of a Dominican Low Mass:

It begins by—Mixing of the water and wine in the chalice.

The prayer: Prevent, O Lord, our actions by Thy inspiration and further them by Thy help that every work of ours may begin from Thee and by Thee be happily ended. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sign of the Cross, *Confiteor*. The rest as above until—Lamb of God. Priest's Communion, and then on as before to the end.

Again you must know that I am speaking chiefly of Low Mass, to which you will probably go most often in your life. Quite often I have referred to the High Mass and its ceremonies, especially when there was something I thought would specially interest you and increase your wish to find out more for yourself.

CHAPTER II

THE ALTAR OF GOD

AFTER making the Sign of the Cross, the priest says alternately with the server the beautiful 42nd Psalm. I once heard the late Father Bertrand Wilberforce O.P. preach a whole first Communion retreat from that one Psalm. This will make you look at it carefully, and try to find out how much there is in it. You must not be like a little girl I once heard of who said:

"I wonder why the Church put that Psalm there; there seems nothing in it."

I wonder which verse you like best. Perhaps it is the Antiphon: "I will go in to the altar of God: to God who giveth joy to my youth."

Or: "Send forth Thy light and Thy truth: they have conducted me into Thy holy mount and into Thy tabernacles."

Do not only follow the words of the Mass, but notice, too, the ceremonies which the Church uses; they are always full of meaning. For instance, at this part of the Holy Mass the priest bows down to acknowledge his sins, reminding us to humble ourselves at the feet of God, because we are sinners, and unworthy to approach him.

The *Confiteor* which the priest now says has not always been in exactly the same words

with which you are familiar. In earlier times it was much shorter, and a short form is still used by the Carthusians, Carmelites and Dominicans.

Dominican Rite.

If you go to a Dominican church, you will notice that the Fathers do not say the 42nd Psalm. They prepare their chalice before beginning Mass, and then, having found their place in the Missal, they stand at the middle of the altar, and say the little prayer:

"Prevent, O Lord, our actions by Thy inspiration, and further them by Thy help that every work of ours may always begin from Thee, and by Thee be happily ended. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Coming to the foot of the altar, he makes the Sign of the Cross, saying "Praise the Lord for He is good," to which the server answers: "For His mercy endureth for ever."

Then follows the *Confiteor*.

This is the short form used by Dominicans:

"I confess to Almighty God, and to blessed Mary ever virgin, and to blessed Dominic our Father, and to all the Saints and to you, Father, that I have sinned exceedingly by thought, word, deed, and omission, through my fault, and I beseech you to pray for me."

Notice the beautiful wording of the *Misereatur* prayer which follows:

" May Almighty God have mercy upon you, and may He forgive you all your sins; may He free you from all evil; may He save you and strengthen you in every good work, and may He lead you to life eternal. Amen."

CHAPTER III

MASS BEGINS

THE *Confiteor* with its accompanying versicles ended, the priest goes up to the altar, saying:

"Take away from us our iniquities, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that we may be worthy to enter with pure minds into the Holy of Holies, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

Having reached the altar, you will see him bend down and kiss it. This is a mark of respect, because the altar is a figure of Jesus Christ Himself; it is also done to reverence the martyrs "whose relics are here."

At High Mass the altar is now incensed for the first time. Do not forget to notice the ceremonies. For instance, you will see that the deacon, when handing anything to or taking anything from the priest, kisses both the object and the hand of the priest. In simple easy ways like these, our Holy Mother the Church tries to get into our heads and hearts the deep love and reverence we ought to have for this great Sacrifice and everything connected with it.

The Introit which follows is really the beginning of the Mass. The Psalm and *Confiteor*, of which we have just spoken, were originally the private prayers of preparation which the priest said as he went in procession

from the sacristy to the altar. In olden times these varied considerably, and when at last Pope Pius V. fixed them, he probably adopted the most popular form.

I think I can make you understand this from the practice in our own days with regard to Holy Communion. You are free to use any prayers you like in preparation; every prayer book has its Acts before Communion. Now if our holy Father wished to fix certain prayers to be said in this country, he might take some widely used form, such, I suppose, as that found in the "Garden of the Soul," and make that the Church's prayer of preparation. Something like this happened in the fixing of the Liturgy.

While the priest was saying his own private prayers the procession wended its way to the altar to the accompaniment of music. The choir sang a Psalm. One verse of it was sung at the beginning and repeated after each succeeding verse as a sort of refrain. This we call the Antiphon.

The singing was only required during the procession, and when it reached the altar, even if the Psalm were unfinished, the Choir ended with the "Glory be to the Father" and the Antiphon repeated.

The Introit is not found in the Ordinary of the Mass, because it is a part which changes from day to day. You will find it wherever the feast that is being kept is placed in your Missal.

You will often be struck, not only by the

beauty of the words of the Introit, but by the way in which they just suit the feast for which they have been chosen. Look at that for the feast of Corpus Christi, and the three for Christmas Day.

DOMINICAN RITE.

There is no incensing of the altar at this part of the Mass in Dominican churches.

CHAPTER IV

IN HEBREW, IN GREEK, AND IN LATIN

GOING to the middle of the altar, the priest says alternately with the server the *Kyrie eleison.*

These are two Greek words which mean: "Lord, have mercy upon us." They are an invocation to the Blessed Trinity. "Kyrie eleison" is said three times to God the Father; then "Christe eleison" three times to God the Son; and again three times "Kyrie eleison" to God the Holy Ghost.

They are the only Greek words in our Mass now, if we except some words sung only on Good Friday. I have said now, because you should know that this could be changed at any time if the Church thought such a change wise. At one time in Rome itself the entire Mass was in Greek. To this day the Holy Sacrifice is offered in nine different languages in different countries, by Catholics owning obedience to our holy Father the Pope.

Besides the Greek of the *Kyrie,* there are in the Mass some Hebrew words—"Amen," "Alleluia," "Sabaoth," "Hosanna." Writers who wish to remind us that the Mass is one and the same sacrifice with that of Calvary sometimes point out that the inscription upon the Cross, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the

Jews," was written in the three languages of our Mass—in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin.

Except on mournful occasions the *Kyrie* is followed by the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, the "Angelic Hymn" as it is often called, because its opening words are the welcome given by the Angels on the first Christmas night to the Babe who was their God and King.

The Church has always shown very special devotion to the *Gloria*. In the early ages to say it was the privilege of a Bishop; it was long years before a simple priest was allowed to say it except on Easter Day and the day of his ordination. There are many directions given for the saying of it. You will see that the priest goes to the middle of the altar, he extends his hands, raises them towards heaven, and then rejoins them. Several times he is told to bow his head. These directions are called "rubrics," from a Latin word meaning "red." In the priest's Missal they are printed in red, so that they may stand out from the actual words of the Mass.

You should love to make yourself familiar with the rubrics, then you will know when to bow your head if you are at a High Mass and the *Gloria* is being sung. At the end of this chapter you will find this hymn of praise, and the words at which the priest bows his head are printed in italics for you.

The *Gloria*, like the *Kyrie*, is a prayer addressed to the Blessed Trinity. The first part is to God the Father; from "O Lord Jesus

Christ " to God the Son; and the words " With the Holy Ghost " to God the Holy Ghost.

Father Nieubarn, O.P., in a book called " The Holy Sacrifice and its Ceremonies," has a very nice thought. He says: " This hymn of praise throws into relief the four principal ends of the Mass. It is a hymn of adoration, " We adore Thee;" of thanksgiving, " We give Thee thanks;" of propitiation, " Who takest away the sins of the world;" of supplication, " Receive our prayers."

I knew a person to whom the good God had sent many and heavy crosses. She was a very brave woman, and very generous, and she had a great devotion to the *Gloria in excelsis*. Once she had been cut to the heart by the cruel conduct of one whom she loved. She had been telling me of her grief, and ended very simply by saying: " I went down the steps, but I could hardly see where I was going, and when I reached the gate I just leaned against it, and said the *Gloria* right through." I think that was splendid. It must, I am sure, have sounded like beautiful music in the ears of God.

As a last thought I suggest to you that you should read the *Gloria* very slowly, and see what a beautiful thanksgiving it would make for Holy Communion.

DOMINICAN RITE.

A Dominican says the *Kyrie eleison* standing in front of his Missal.

For the *Gloria in excelsis* he goes to the middle of the altar and says the first words, but then returns and reads the rest of it from the book.

Gloria in excelsis *Deo :* et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis. Laudamus te: Benedicimus te: *Adoramus te :* Glorificamus te. *Gratias agimus tibi* propter magnam gloriam tuam: Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis: Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite *Jesu Christe :* Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris: Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi, *suscipe deprecationem nostram.* Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam Tu solus sanctus: Tu solus Dominus: Tu solus altissimus, *Jesu Christe :* cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory be to *God* on high and on earth peace to men of good will. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, *we adore Thee,* we glorify Thee. *We give Thee thanks* for Thy great glory. O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, *Jesus Christ ;* O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, *receive our prayer.* Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only most high, O *Jesus Christ,* with the Holy Ghost, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

You will find the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria* in the Ordinary of the Mass.

day, and is said not only at Mass, but at the various Hours of the Divine Office. These prayers of the Church are very beautiful. It seems a pity we do not use them much more often in our private devotions instead of some of those found in modern prayer books, which cannot be compared with them for beauty of language or accuracy of thought. Look through them, and see if you cannot find in them just what you want to say to God. They will give you, too, the spirit of the Church.

This is the Collect for the second Sunday of Advent. You cannot help feeling how perfectly it expresses the thought proper to this time of preparation for the coming of the King. "Stir up, O Lord, our hearts to prepare the ways of Thy only begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve Thee with pure minds. Amen."

CHAPTER VI

LESSONS

AS you grow older, you will often in your reading and studies have brought home to you the marvellous power which the Catholic Church has of preserving things.

Our divine Lord gave her the mission to "go and teach all nations." Now you will discover that when the Church found amongst the people she was striving to win to Christ some custom or ceremony which could be kept and blessed and used for the service of God, she took it and made it her own. I hope that one day some of you will be very interested and perhaps very learned in the History of Religions. In the meantime, if you fix in your mind this beautiful idea of the Church as a preserver, you will never be like a poor lady with whom I was speaking some time ago. We were talking about the Mass, and at a certain point I said: "That is one of the many things which the Church owes to the Synagogue." Her answer was: "What a shocking and disloyal thing to say!"

Now the Lessons read at Holy Mass are certainly an inheritance from the services in the Synagogue in which our Blessed Lord Himself so often joined, and part of which consisted of portions read from the Sacred Scriptures. On ordinary occasions there are

now only two of these portions, one of which we call the Epistle and one the Gospel, but in former times there were several. You can see traces of this still in some Masses, for example, on Ember days.

The first Lesson came to be called the Epistle, because it is so often taken from the letters of the Apostles and chiefly from St. Paul's, but this is not always the case. Look at your Mass for the Holy Innocents, the Immaculate Conception, and there are many other instances where the first Lesson is not taken from an Epistle.

In the early Church the Acts of the Martyrs were sometimes read instead of a passage from the Holy Bible.

In your Missal a certain definite passage is printed, and you know that just this will be read, neither more nor less. At one time, however, the reader went on until the celebrant made him a sign to stop.

To read the Epistle is the privilege of the subdeacon. When he is ordained a book is given to him by the Bishop.

This Lesson is read at the south side of the altar, which we call the Epistle side. We sit during it and other Lessons, if there are others, always with the exception of the Gospel. At the end the server answers: "Deo gratias." (Thanks be to God).

The Epistle at the end of this chapter is taken from the Mass for the Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Patron-Saint of Catholic scholars.

It is an example of a Lesson which is not really an Epistle; it comes from the Book of Wisdom in the Old Testament. It helps many people to let the thoughts put before them in the morning Mass go through the whole day. If you think it would help you, you could sometimes take your Missal when you go to make your visit to Jesus in the Tabernacle. For example, you could easily make this Epistle for the feast of St. Thomas into a Eucharistic prayer, by replacing the words "Spirit of Wisdom" by "the Blessed Sacrament." At the end you would then get: "For the Blessed Sacrament is an infinite treasure to men, which they that use become the friends of God."

That is surely most true.

EPISTLE FOR THE FEAST OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS.

(Wisdom vii. 7-14.)

I wished and understanding was given me: and I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came upon me:

And I preferred her before kingdoms and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison of her.

Neither did I compare unto her any precious stone: for all gold in comparison of her, is as a little sand, and silver in respect to her shall be counted as clay.

I loved her above health and beauty, and chose to have her instead of light: for her light cannot be put out.

Now all good things came to me together with her, and innumerable riches through her hands.

And I rejoiced in all these: for this wisdom went

before me, and I knew not that she was the mother of them all.

Which I have learned without guile, and communicate without envy, and her riches I hide not.

For she is an infinite treasure to men! which they that use, become the friends of God, being commended for the gift of discipline.

DOMINICAN RITE.

In a Dominican Mass, no *Deo gratias* is said after the Epistle.

CHAPTER VII

POETRY IN MY MISSAL

ONE of our very first experiences when we were quite small was a realization of the unpleasantness of most things which last a long time. How difficult it was to sit still during a long sermon, to keep good during a long visit! The Church understands this. You know we often speak of her as "our Holy Mother the Church," and we all, even the oldest of us, are just her children. It is told of the great St. Teresa, that when she lay dying, someone thought to console her by speaking of her wonderful visions and of the grand things she had been allowed to do for God. The Saint made no answer, she seemed not to pay the slightest heed, but after a time she remarked very quietly: "What I thank God most for is that I die a child of Holy Church."

Now one way in which the Church's understanding of her children is shown is in the arrangement of her services. In Holy Mass there is great variety; we are not kept too long at the same thing. Already we have had psalm and hymn, prayer and reading. The reading, however, is not finished with the Lesson or Epistle of which we have just been speaking; there is more to follow. So at this point there is a change, and we sing the Gradual.

This part of the Mass you will find after the Epistle in the Mass for the day, and not in the Ordinary. It usually consists of verses from a Psalm. In early times a whole Psalm was sung, but now we have only a short portion.

The Gradual gets its name from the Latin word *gradus*, "a step," because it was sung from the step of the pulpit from which the Epistle was read. It is followed by the Alleluia verse, or, on some occasions, by the Tract. These, like the Gradual, are generally taken from the Psalms, though not always, as you will see if you look at your Mass for the Dead.

On five occasions there is a poem called a Sequence coming here. The occasions are Easter, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, Our Lady's Sorrows, and the Requiem Mass. Some of these you know quite well: the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* (Come, Holy Ghost) for Pentecost; the *Stabat Mater* (At the Cross her station keeping) for Our Lady's Sorrows, which you are accustomed to sing at the Stations of the Cross.

If you have a procession on Corpus Christi, you probably know the *Lauda Sion*, the hymn written for the Mass of that day by the Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas, in honour of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. In it he has managed to tell us nearly all the very important things which we believe about Him there.

The other two Sequences are less well known. They are the *Victimæ Paschali* (To the Paschal Victim) sung at Easter, and the *Dies irae*

"O day of wrath," a poem about the day of judgment, which forms part of the Mass for the Dead.

I am going to give you a translation of the sequence which you will find in your Mass for Whit Sunday. If you will read it slowly and try to understand it, I think you will find it is a beautiful prayer to say when you are preparing for confession, or at any time when you want to ask for God's special help and guidance.

VENI, SANCTE SPIRITUS.

Come, O Spirit, Lord of grace,
From Thy heavenly dwelling place,
Bring pure light our gloom to chase.

Come, the Friend of all brought low,
Fountain whence all graces flow,
On the heart Thy light bestow.

Thine to wipe the bitter tear;
Thine the lonely heart to cheer;
Panting spirits find Thee near.

In our labour Thou art rest;
Tears by Thee are soloced best;
Raging heat by Thee refreshed.

Come, O light most clear and blest,
Come and fill each longing breast;
Be Thy people's constant Guest.

If Thy Deity be hence,
Nothing brings man honour thence,
Nothing is without offence.

Come, to cleanse the guilty stain,
On the hardened heart to rain,
Wounds of sin to heal again.

To Thy Will the stubborn mould;
Warm and melt the bosom cold;
Bring the erring to the Fold.

Unto us who seek Thy Face,
And in Thee reliance place,
Give Thy seven-fold gifts of grace.

Pardon grant if we offend;
Grant us space till we amend,
Joy above that knows no end.

DOMINICAN RITE.

Dominicans also have a Sequence read on Christmas Day, the Epiphany, the Purification, the Feast of St. Dominic, and the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

CHAPTER VIII

A BOOK TO KISS

NEXT comes the Gospel, the last Lesson, and the Church teaches us in what deep reverence she holds God's Holy Word by the very elaborate ceremonies with which she surrounds the reading of the Gospel, but you only see these at High Mass.

A young artist, a Protestant, spoke to me once about the Bible, and seemed surprised to find me sympathetic; she said she had always heard that Catholics treated it with a sort of contempt. My answer was to invite her to High Mass on the following Sunday, and what she saw satisfied her as I knew it would. I should like you to pray next time you are at Mass for those outside the Church who have a great love for the Holy Bible. Ask our divine Lord to give them the grace to find out from it which is the true religion. In the Catholic Church even the book of the Gospels is shown deep reverence. Before the days of printing the most beautiful vellum was always chosen by the monks on which to write it. This was sometimes stained a delicate colour, and the words written in gold and silver letters. It was often bound in covers of some precious metal, and richly decorated with costly jewels.

A French magazine, written by the Benedictine Fathers, had in it some years ago a most

interesting account of the gorgeous ceremonies, which show us what our Catholic forefathers thought of the Bible.

On great feasts it was left all day upon the altar.

It was often carried in procession, and when a Bishop visited any cathedral or monastery, the book of the Gospels was brought to the door for him to kiss.

At General Councils it has been placed on a special throne, as representing better than picture or statue Jesus Christ Himself.

If for some lawful purpose you are called upon to take an oath, you will be given a Bible to kiss, and a convert making his Profession of Faith at his reception into the Church does it with his hand upon the book of the Gospels. St. Dominic always carried a copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew about with him on his long and fatiguing journeys.

I think all this will help you to understand with what reverence and devotion you should hear the Gospel at Holy Mass.

You will find it in your Missal in the part proper for the day and not in the Ordinary.

At High Mass you can see all the beautiful ceremonies carried out.

It is the privilege of the deacon to read it. At his Ordination the Bishop hands him the book of the Gospels, and commissions him to sing the Gospel in the Church of God.

At one time it was the prerogative of the Emperor, vested in rochet and stole, to read

the Gospel on Christmas night. If any of you become Benedictines, you will see it is the Abbot who sings the Gospel from his stall at Matins, vested in his stole and assisted by two acolytes.

The Missal is now removed to the north side of the altar, which we call the Gospel side.

The deacon at High Mass takes the book of the Gospels from the little table at the side called the credence table, lays it on the altar, and kneeling on the steps says this prayer, which at Low Mass is said by the priest bending down in the middle of the altar, as he passes to the Gospel side: "Cleanse my heart and my lips, O Almighty God, who didst cleanse the lips of the Prophet Isaias with a burning coal; and deign through Thy gracious mercy to purify me that I may worthily announce Thy holy Gospel. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

Then, taking up the sacred book, he kneels before the priest and asks his blessing. The priest repeats almost the same words as the deacon has himself said, blesses him, and lays his hand on the book for the deacon to kiss.

Then a procession is formed to the place from which the Gospel is to be read, consisting of the acolytes with their lighted candles, the thurifer, the subdeacon, and, lastly, the deacon carrying the book.

All the people rise. In ancient times kings and princes took off their diadems; knights drew and brandished their swords.

The deacon opens the book and sings: "The Lord be with you."

After the reply he announces what he is about to read:

"The beginning (or the continuation) of the Gospel according to *N*." At the same time, with his thumb, he makes the Sign of the Cross on the book, then on his forehead, lips, and heart. The people also sign themselves, and it may interest you to know that this is the oldest form of the Sign of the Cross.

The answer to the announcement of the Gospel is: "Glory be to Thee, O Lord."

Then the deacon incenses the book three times, and intones the passage of the Gospel appointed for the day. At the end is said: "Praise be to Thee, O Christ." At Low Mass it is the server who makes these answers.

The subdeacon then takes the book to the priest, who kisses it, saying: "May our sins be blotted out by the words of the Gospel."

At one time, the book was offered to everyone to kiss. While the choir sang the Creed, the subdeacon, accompanied by the thurifer, presented it to each person in turn.

The following is the Gospel appointed to be read on the Feast of St. Joseph of Calasanz:

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus saying: Who thinkest Thou is the greater in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus, calling unto Him a little child set him in the midst of them and said:

"Amen, I say to you, unless ye be converted

and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven. And he that shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me." (St. Matt. xviii.).

DOMINICAN RITE.

The subdeacon takes the book from the altar where it has been since the beginning of Mass, and gives it to the deacon. Standing and inclined towards the priest the deacon asks his blessing, which the priest gives in much the same words as above. He makes the Sign of the Cross over the deacon, but does not give him his hand to kiss.

The crossbearer carries the cross in the procession.

Laus tibi Christe is not answered at the end.

When the subdeacon has offered the book to the priest and to the deacon to kiss he replaces it upon the altar.

CHAPTER IX

SOLDIERS OF THE KING

NOW turn back to your Ordinary of the Mass to find the Nicene Creed.

There are several Creeds in use in the Catholic Church. The first you learned when you were quite small, and I am sure that you say it every day in your morning or night prayers, or perhaps both. I mean the Apostles' Creed. One pretty legend says that the twelve articles were the work of the twelve Apostles, one Apostle being responsible for each article. Though this is not true, the Creed is very ancient and dates from Apostolic times.

The Creed we say at Mass is a *development* of the Apostles' Creed. It gets its name of Nicene from the town of Nicæa, where in the year 325 a General Council of the Church was held. Some persons had been teaching wrongly on several points, notably concerning the divinity of our Blessed Lord. At this Council they were condemned and the exact teaching of the Church stated more plainly. Some of the decisions were embodied in the Creed which is now said at Mass on Sundays and some other feasts.

If any of you become priests, or enter certain Religious Orders, you will have the privilege of sharing in the Church's own daily prayer

This is called the Divine Office. One of the parts said in the morning is called Prime, and on Sundays a Creed, which is called the Athanasian Creed, often forms part. It gets its name from the great St. Athanasius, by whom it was supposed to have been written. It is now generally admitted that he did not write it, but it was not at all wonderful that people should have thought him the author, for it deals with the teaching of the Church about the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation of God the Son, and of these doctrines St. Athanasius was the most famous champion.

There is still another Creed of which you should know—that of Pope Pius IV., compiled after the great Council of Trent which condemned the teaching of the Reformers. This Creed is repeated as a Profession of Faith by converts upon their reception into the Catholic Church.

The word Creed comes from *Credo* (I believe), the first Latin word with which it begins. A number of prayers have received their names in this way. I am sure you can find examples of this; for instance, the *Magnificat* and the *Memorare* will at once come to your mind.

In the early days of the Church, those persons who were still under instruction and had not yet received the Sacrament of Baptism were called catechumens. They were not allowed to be present during the most solemn parts of the Mass, but only to the end of the Creed. Hence the first part from the beginning to the

Creed was called the Mass of the catechumens. At this point they, in company with those Catholics who were doing public penance for their sins, had to leave the church. In our own times the Church is more indulgent, and all, however unworthy, are allowed to remain during the whole of the great Sacrifice, and to join their worship to that which Jesus is offering to the Godhead in their name and in their place.

In England we stand during the recitation of the Creed at Low Mass. This is said to be a practice dating from the time of the Penal Laws. You know that from the reign of Elizabeth to that of George III. laws were passed which sought to prevent the practice of the Catholic faith in these countries. Our brave forefathers often met in the woods, in caves on the hill-sides, and there priests braver even than themselves—for their punishment, if caught, was more severe—came to offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

In the accounts of those sad days there are many true stories of Mass in these lonely places, telling of priest and people surprised by Protestant soldiers. If you read them you will find these stories help to keep your own faith bright and strong.

We always kneel at the words: " Et homo factus est " (And was made man).

This is a little act of adoration offered to God the Son made man for us and for our salvation.

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After these words have been sung at a High Mass the deacon goes to the credence table and gets the burse. He takes out the corporal and spreads it over the altar stone. In another set of talks I have told you about the sacred linens and other things used at Mass.*

You should always join in the Creed. It is the Church's own Act of Faith, as the *Confiteor* is her official Act of Contrition. By saying it fervently you strengthen this great virtue in your own soul.

The Nicene Creed.

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum; et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula; Deum de Deo; Lumen de Lumine; Deum verum de Deo vero; genitum non factum; consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt; qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de cœlis; et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto, ex Maria Virgine, ET HOMO FACTUS EST; crucifixus etiam pro nobis; sub Pontio Pilato passus,

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages; God of God; Light of Light; true God of true God; begotten, not made; consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary: AND WAS MADE MAN. He was crucified also for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was

* Master, where dwellest Thou?

et sepultus est; et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas, et ascendit in cœlum, sedet ad dexteram Patris: et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos; cujus regni non erit finis.

buried. The third day He rose again according to the Scriptures: and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father: and He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.

Et in Spiritum Sanctum Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit: qui cum Patre, et Filio simul adoratur, et conglorificatur, qui locutus est per Prophetas. Et unam sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum Baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who, together with the Father and the Son, is adored and glorified; who spake by the prophets. And one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

DOMINICAN RITE.

A Dominican priest begins the Creed at the middle of the altar, but returns to the Missal to continue it. He comes back to the middle to kneel at the words: "Et incarnatus est" to "Et homo factus est," and then goes back to the book to finish.

At High Mass the deacon spreads the corporal during the singing of the Epistle.

CHAPTER X

GIFTS

WITH the Creed the preparatory part of Holy Mass ends, and we come to the Offertory.

The priest turns to the people with the wish you now know so well:

"Dominus vobiscum" (The Lord be with you).

"Et cum spiritu tuo" (And with thy spirit).

Then he says: "Oremus" (Let us pray).

But no prayer follows. Long, long ago, when the catechumens had left the church, the people here were asked to pray for a number of different intentions. You will understand what I mean if you will study the Good Friday Mass. You have in it a collection of prayers for the Church, the Pope, Bishops, etc. You will find them after the Gospel because no Creed is sung on Good Friday. Probably at every Mass there used to be a similar collection of prayers, but we have not got it now.

Then in your Mass for the day you will find an Antiphon called the Offertory. Like the Introit and Gradual, about which we have already spoken, this was originally a whole Psalm, but the Antiphon alone is now left.

The reason for the whole Psalm was the ancient custom of receiving at this point the offerings of the people. In these far-off times

the faithful brought to the church offerings of what was needed, both for the service of the altar and for the support of the priest. While these were being received the choir sang a Psalm. In another book I have spoken of these offerings as an explanation of the large corporal which had to be used in those days to cover them.

From the offerings of the people the priest selected what was needed for the Consecration. The rest was used, some for the support of the priests, some for the poor, and some was given to those who were not receiving Holy Communion as " blessed bread."

We no longer make offerings of bread and wine, but it is at this part of the Mass that the collection is taken which is used to buy what is necessary for the church and for the priest. We should count it among our privileges to be allowed to give. Too often, alas ! it is looked upon as an unpleasant duty, and sometimes, I think, people are inclined to forget that there is a Fifth Commandment of the Church which bids us contribute to the support of our pastors.

There are three principal parts of Holy Mass, and to miss one of them is to miss Mass. These are the Oblation, the Consecration, and the Priest's Communion.

The Oblation is the offering up to God by the priest of the bread and wine, which are to be changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The prayers with which the priest accompanies this Oblation are very beautiful,

if only you will try to understand them. They are found in the Ordinary of the Mass, to which you must turn back as soon as you have read the Offertory.

This is the Offertory for the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus: "I will praise Thee, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and glorify Thy Name for ever, for Thou, O Lord, art sweet and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon Thee. Alleluia."

CHAPTER XI

LIKE INCENSE IN THY SIGHT

TOGETHER we are now going to look at the prayers of the Oblation.

Standing in the middle of the altar, the priest takes off the silken veil which is covering the sacred vessels. He takes with both hands the paten on which is lying the large altar bread, so soon to be changed into the Body of our Lord. He raises it up and says the following prayer:

OBLATION OF THE HOST.

Suscipe, sancte Pater omnipotens æterne Deus, hanc immaculatam Hostiam, quam ego indignus famulus tuus offero tibi Deo meo vivo et vero, pro innumerabilibus peccatis et offensionibus et negligentiis meis, et pro omnibus circumstantibus, sed et pro omnibus fidelibus Christianis, vivis atque defunctis: ut mihi et illis proficiat ad salutem in vitam æternam. Amen.

Accept, O Holy Father, Almighty, Eternal God, this immaculate Host, which I, Thy unworthy servant, offer unto Thee, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offences, and negligences; and for all here present; as also for all faithful Christians, both living and dead, that it may be profitable for my own and for their salvation unto life everlasting. Amen.

I want you to notice a little phrase which, later on, may puzzle you. The priest calls the bread, "This unspotted Host." Try to remember that the Holy Mass is not a set of

prayers, but one great ACT, the Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood. Here the priest is already thinking of the Victim—you know that the word "Host" means victim—which will so soon be upon the altar. You will find other similar expressions.

What a beautiful prayer this would be to say when we have sinned, or when we are looking for a prayer to say for others!

Laying the Host upon the corporal, the priest takes the chalice, and, going to the left side of the altar, pours in first wine, and then a few drops of water. This mixing of the wine and water has been given many beautiful meanings. In her prayer the Church alludes to the two natures of our Blessed Lord, and asks that we may be made partakers of His divine nature.

When the Priest pours wine and water into the Chalice.

Deus, ✠ qui humanæ substantiæ dignitatem mirabiliter condidisti, et mirabilius reformasti: da nobis per hujus aquæ et vini mysterium, ejus divinitatis esse consortes, qui humanitatis nostræ fieri dignatus est particeps, Jesus Christus Filius tuus Dominus noster: qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

O God, ✠ who, in creating human nature, didst wonderfully dignify it, and hast still more wonderfully renewed it: grant that, by the mystery of this water and wine, we may be made partakers of His divinity, who vouchsafed to become partaker of our humanity, Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Lord; who with Thee liveth and reigneth, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

The priest returns to the middle of the altar and, holding up the chalice, says the following prayer with his eyes raised to the crucifix:

THE OBLATION OF THE CHALICE.

Offerimus tibi, Domine, Calicem salutaris, tuam deprecantes clementiam, ut in conspectu divinæ Majestatis tuæ pro nostra et totius mundi salute cum odore suavitatis ascendat. Amen.	We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the Chalice of salvation, beseeching Thy clemency that in the sight of Thy Divine Majesty, it may ascend with the odour of sweetness, for our salvation, and for that of the whole world. Amen.

He replaces the chalice on the altar, and you will notice that he covers it with the pall to prevent anything falling into it.

At High Mass there is a very interesting ceremony at this point. The subdeacon, with a large silken veil round his shoulders, receives from the deacon the paten, which he covers with the ends of the veil. Going to the foot of the altar he stands behind the priest, holding it until the *Pater noster*.

I have told you already that very often our ceremonies have their meaning in some ancient custom, now no longer used or needed. The paten in early times was much larger—in fact, often as large as a big plate. It was in the priest's way when not in actual use, and so was given to someone to hold.

After replacing the chalice, the priest bows low before the altar and says:

In spiritu humilitatis, et in animo contrito, suscipiamur a te, Domine; et sic fiat Sacrificium nostrum in conspectu tuo hodie, ut placeat tibi, Domine Deus.

In the spirit of humility, and with a contrite heart, let us be received by Thee, O Lord: and grant that the sacrifice we offer in Thy sight this day may be pleasing to Thee, O Lord God.

Followed by:

Veni, Sanctificator, omnipotens, æterne Deus, et benedic hoc ✠ Sacrificium, tuo sancto nomini præparatum.

Come, O Sanctifier, Almighty, Eternal God, and bless this ✠ Sacrifice prepared to Thy holy Name.

You notice that this is one of the few prayers addressed to God the Holy Ghost.

At High Mass you have the second incensing of the altar next. If any of you belong to a Guild of the Holy Angels, you will notice with special interest that in the prayer for blessing the incense you have named the great Archangel Michael. Some scholars have thought that it should be St. Gabriel. If you read the prayer and then read St. Luke i. 11 and 19, you will see why.

Here at High Mass the incense is blessed, and the bread and wine and the altar are incensed.

Per intercessionem beati Michaelis Archangeli, stantis a dextris altaris incensi, et omnium Electorum suorum, incensum istud ✠ dignetur Dominus benedicere, et in odorem

May the Lord, by the intercession of blessed Michael the Archangel, standing at the right hand of the altar of incense, and of all His elect, vouchsafe to bless ✠ this

suavitatis accipere. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

incense, and receive it as an odour of sweetness. Through Christ, etc. Amen.

Incensum istud a te benedictum ascendat ad te, Domine, et descendat super nos misericordia tua.

May this incense which Thou hast blest, O Lord, ascend to Thee, and may Thy mercy descend upon us.

While he incenses the altar the priest says some verses containing very beautiful petitions. When you want to be helped to pray well you could make use of the same words:

Dirigatur, Domine, oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectu tuo: elevatio manuum mearum sacrificium vespertinum.

Let my prayer, O Lord, ascend like incense in Thy sight: and the lifting up of my hands be as an evening sacrifice.

Are you quick tempered, and do the angry words escape almost before you know? If so, you should say very earnestly, not only at High Mass, but often:

Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo, et ostium circumstantiæ labiis meis,

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door round about my lips,

or perhaps you are often tempted when you have done wrong to make excuses, it may be, not always truthful ones. There is a special verse for you to help you in your fight against this fault:

ut non declinet cor meum in verba malitiæ, ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis.

that my heart may not incline to evil words, to make excuses in sins.

However many faults we may have we do all want to love God, and with our whole heart we all join in the prayer with which the priest gives back the thurible to the deacon:

Accendat in nobis Dominus ignem sui amoris, et flammam æternæ caritatis. Amen.	May the Lord enkindle in us the fire of His love, and the flame of everlasting charity. Amen.

DOMINICAN RITE.

A Dominican priest's Oblation prayers are quite different. He has already mixed his chalice, and having said the Offertory verse, he proceeds:

"What shall I give back to the Lord for all that He has given to me?" And, taking in both hands the chalice with the paten on it bearing the Host, he continues:

"I will take the chalice of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord."

And raising both together he offers them to God with this one short prayer:

"Receive, O Holy Trinity, this Oblation which I offer to Thee in memory of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and grant that it may ascend as pleasing in Thy sight, and work the eternal salvation of me and all the faithful."

At High Mass no special prayers are put down for the priest to say at the incensing of the altar.

CHAPTER XII

AMONG THE LILIES

IF we wish to make anything clean and spotless we wash it. The idea of washing brings immediately to our mind the thought of cleanliness, of purity.

After the Oblation the priest goes to the Epistle side of the altar, and there washes his fingers. In olden times this was necessary, because he had just been handling the loaves of bread and flasks of wine offered by the people. Now that these offerings are no longer made, there is no actual necessity for washing, especially when we remember that this was almost the last thing the priest did before leaving the sacristy to begin Mass.

We must then look for a symbolical meaning. St. Thomas Aquinas, the Dominican Saint of the Blessed Sacrament, says: "We are not accustomed to touch any precious object save with clean hands," and he then goes on to say that washing of the hands denotes the cleansing from even the smallest sins.

At the Lavabo, as this part of the Mass is called, we think of making our soul white, and are reminded of the beautiful virtue of purity, so intimately connected with the thought of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. If you like, you can make the special intention of always joining in the verses from the Psalm which the priest

says while washing his fingers, and offering them to our Lord as a prayer to obtain from Him the grace never to offend Him by a sin against this holy virtue.

Just as no special Preparation Prayers were fixed in early ages, so no particular prayer was ordered during this ceremony—the priest said what he liked, and in one old English Missal we find this beautiful little prayer, which I think you will like: " Cleanse me, O Lord, from every stain of mind and body, that, pure, I may be able to perform the holy work of the Lord."

In a book which I hope you will read later is a very interesting passage about the ceremonial washing of hands, which I will copy out for you. You see it is not only the priest who needs to be free from sin in order to celebrate the Holy Mysteries, we who assist should also remind ourselves of the purity of heart we should take into the presence of God. In order to do this, Dom Vandeur says: " In the first centuries of Christianity the faithful used to wash their hands at the fountains which were to be found at the entrance of the churches. All that now remains of this purification is our custom of making a Sign of the Cross upon ourselves with holy water on entering a church. In monasteries these fountains were placed in the quadrangle or small court within the enclosure, which can still be seen in many cases. The water of these fountains was reserved for this symbolic cleansing of the monks."

THE LAVABO.

Lavabo inter innocentes manus meas: et circumdabo altare tuum, Domine:

I will wash my hands among the innocent: and will encompass Thy altar, O Lord.

Ut audiam vocem laudis: et enarrem universa mirabilia tua.

That I may hear the voice of praise; and tell of all Thy marvellous works.

Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuæ et locum habitationis gloriæ tuæ.

I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.

Ne perdas cum impiis, Deus, animam meam: et cum viris sanguinum vitam meam.

Destroy not my soul with the wicked, O God; nor my life with men of blood.

In quorum manibus iniquitates sunt: dextera eorum repleta est muneribus.

In whose hands are iniquities: their right hand is filled with gifts.

Ego autem in innocentia mea ingressus sum: redime me, et miserere mei.

But I have walked in my innocence; redeem me and have mercy upon me.

Pes meus stetit in directo: in ecclesiis benedicam te, Domine.

My foot hath stood in the right path: in the churches I will bless Thee, O Lord.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

The Offertory is ended with this prayer.

Suscipe, sancta Trinitas, hanc oblationem quam tibi offerimus ob memoriam Passionis, Resurrectionis, et Ascensionis Jesu Christi Domini nostri: et in honorem

Receive, O holy Trinity, this oblation which we make to Thee in memory of the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in honour of the blessed

beatæ Mariæ semper Virginis, et beati Joannis Baptistæ, et sanctorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, et istorum et omnium Sanctorum: ut illis proficiat ad honorem, nobis autem ad salutem: et illi pro nobis intercedere dignentur in cœlis, quorum memoriam agimus in terris. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Mary ever a Virgin, of blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, of these and all the Saints: that it may be available to their honour and our salvation; and may they vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven, whose memory we celebrate on earth. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

You can think out many things for yourself about this. You are reminded of our dear Lord's own request by the words: " In memory of the Passion." You can also compare the list of names with those which you have already used in the *Confiteor*, and try to discover reasons for the choice made by the Church.

DOMINICAN RITE.

Dominicans only say the first three verses of the Psalm while washing their fingers.

They then go to the middle of the altar and, bowing profoundly, say the prayer of which we have spoken earlier in the Roman Rite:

In spiritu humilitatis, et in animo contrito, suscipiamur a te, Domine; et sic fiat Sacrificium nostrum in conspectu tuo hodie, ut placeat tibi, Domine Deus.

In the spirit of humility, and with a contrite heart, let us be received by Thee, O Lord: and grant that the sacrifice we offer in Thy sight this day, may be pleasing to Thee, O Lord God.

CHAPTER XIII

SECRETS

AFTER saying the prayer with which we finished the last chapter, the priest turns round to the people and says:

THE ORATE FRATRES.

Orate, fratres, ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat apud Deum Patrem omnipotentem.	Brethren, pray that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty.
R. Suscipiat Dominus sacrificium de manibus tuis ad laudem et gloriam nominis sui, ad utilitatem quoque nostram, totiusque Ecclesiæ suæ sanctæ. Amen.	*R.* May the Lord receive the sacrifice from thy hands, to the praise and glory of His Name, to our benefit, and to that of all His holy Church. Amen.

This reminds us that it is our Sacrifice. Jesus is offering Himself for us. It is the time to renew the intention for which we are offering our Mass. We should always join our intention to those of our dear Lord Himself, who is offering His Sacrifice for the four ends for which He instituted the Holy Mass:

1. To give supreme honour and glory to God.
2. To thank Him for all His benefits.
3. To obtain pardon for sin.
4. To obtain all other graces and blessings.

We may have, too, our own particular intention. This helps us to pray more earnestly

God puts into our hands the great treasure of the Holy Mass, and waits to see what we shall do with it. Alas! sometimes we do nothing. Imagine a poor little child who was given a great sum of money, on entering a large and beautiful shop, and told that he might buy what he liked with it, but that he would not be allowed to take the money out with him when he went away. What would you think of his stupidity, if he wandered about and at the end of the time just left the money lying on the counter without buying anything? What would you think of his going out empty-handed, when he had need of everything and everything was within his reach?

Don't we, whose souls are so poor, often do this with the treasure of Holy Mass?

When the priest invites you to pray that God may accept his Sacrifice and yours, pray earnestly for what you desire to offer it.

This is the last time the priest turns round until after he has received Holy Communion. He is about to enter upon the most solemn part of the Mass, and he asks us to pray for him.

Don't forget to do it. I expect we none of us pray nearly enough for our priests. Perhaps some girl who is reading this will one day be a Carmelite nun, like Sister Teresa, the Little Flower of Jesus. Then to pray for priests will be her special vocation, but we should all do our share, and this part of the Mass is a very suitable occasion.

When he turns back to the altar, the priest

finds in his Missal the feast of the day, and reads the prayer called the Secret. Many reasons have been given for this name, but the most obvious is that it is said in a whisper, as you tell a secret; it is said secretly.

The number of Secret Prayers corresponds with the Collects. In nearly all of them we beg God to accept the offering we are making, and ask for some grace in return.

The priest ends by saying aloud the words: " Per omnia sæcula sæculorum " (World without end), to let us know that the Secret Prayers are finished.

This is the Secret for the Feast of the Epiphany:

" Graciously look, we beseech Thee, O Lord, upon the offerings of Thy Church, in which gold, frankincense, and myrrh are no longer laid before Thee, but He is sacrificed and received, who by those gifts was signified, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord."

DOMINICAN RITE.

The server makes no answer to the *Orate Fratres*.

CHAPTER XIV

WITH THE ANGELS

THE prayer which now begins is called the Preface. It is really the beginning of the Canon of the Mass, though this title is now placed a little later, and there we will talk about it.

It is divided into three parts: the beginning and the end do not change, but the middle does. In very early times a long list of God's benefits to us came at this point. Instead, there is now some phrase having reference to the feast kept. For example, at Passiontide, after the introduction, " It is truly meet and just, right and salutary, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, Holy Lord, Father Almighty, everlasting God," it goes on to say: " Who didst establish the salvation of mankind in the wood of the Cross, that life should thence arise whence death had come; and that he who had overcome in the tree should in the tree be overcome, by Christ our Lord." Then the conclusion.

Formerly there were a very large number of Prefaces, one for almost every feast. Now there are thirteen:

1. The Common Preface for days not having any special one of their own.

2. The Preface of the Nativity, used during the Christmas Octave, for the Feast of the Holy

Name, the Purification, Corpus Christi, the Transfiguration.

3. The Epiphany Preface.

4. That for Lent.

5. One for Passiontide, used also for Feasts of the Holy Cross, of the Passion of our Lord, and the Sacred Heart.

6. That for Easter.

7 The Ascension.

8. Whitsuntide.

9. Trinity. This is used on all Sundays of the year which have no proper Preface.

10. Our Lady's.

11. St. Joseph's.

12. The Apostles', said also on the Feasts of St. Peter's Chair.

13. The Preface for Requiem Masses.

Some religious Orders—for example, the Benedictines—have a proper Preface for the Feast of their Founder.

The Prefaces are usually put together in one place in the Missal.

One of the names of the Blessed Sacrament is the Holy Eucharist. The word "Eucharist" means thanksgiving. You remember that on the first Holy Thursday, when Jesus Christ gave us His great Gift, we are told, "He gave thanks."

The Preface is a very solemn thanksgiving prayer. I do not know whether you have ever thought of saying it when you wanted to show your gratitude to God for something He has done for you. You might use it sometimes as a thanksgiving after Holy Communion.

It begins with a dialogue between the priest and the server, who represents the people. This time the priest does not turn round to speak to them. Indeed, in earlier times it would have been useless to do so, for at the beginning of the Preface the curtain was drawn right before the altar, sheltering it from the sight of the people.

The holy Angels have a very prominent place in the Preface—five of the nine glorious Choirs are solemnly introduced, and we beg of God the favour of being allowed to join our weak voice to their glorious chant.

It is an opportunity to renew our fervour, and to try to imitate the reverence and devotion of the Angels. We are told that during Holy Mass the sanctuary is full of them, that they are there as heavenly courtiers adoring their King with the profoundest adoration. Let us join then and say with our whole heart: "Holy, Holy, Holy."

The Latin word for holy is "sanctus," and at these words the bell is rung for the first time, to warn us that the most solemn part of the Mass is about to begin.

This is the Preface for Trinity Sunday, and any other Sunday in the year which has no proper one assigned to it:

P. Per omnia sæcula sæculorum.	*P.* World without end.
R. Amen.	*R.* Amen.
P. Dominus vobiscum.	*P.* The Lord be with you.
R. Et cum spiritu tuo.	*R.* And with thy spirit.

P. Sursum corda.
R. Habemus ad Dominum.
P. Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro.
R. Dignum et justum est.

P. Lift up your hearts.
R. We have lifted them up unto the Lord.
P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
R. It is meet and just.

THE PREFACE.

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper, et ubique gratias agere; Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus; qui cum unigenito Filio tuo et Spiritu Sancto unus es Deus, unus es Dominus; non in unius singularitate personæ, sed in unius Trinitate substantiæ. Quod enim de tua gloria, revelante te, credimus, hoc de Filio tuo, hoc de Spiritu Sancto, sine differentia discretionis sentimus. Ut in confessione veræ sempiternæque Deitatis, et in personis proprietas, et in essentia unitas, et in majestate adoretur æqualitas. Quam laudant Angeli atque Archangeli, Cherubim quoque ac Seraphim, qui non cessant clamare quotidie, una voce dicentes.

It is truly meet and just, right and salutary, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Everlasting God: who together with Thine only-begotten Son and the Holy Ghost art one God and one Lord; not in the singleness of the one Person, but in the Trinity of one substance. For that which, by Thy revelation, we believe of Thy glory, the same also do we hold as to Thy Son, the same as to the Holy Ghost, without difference or distinction. That in the confession of the true and everlasting Godhead, distinction in Persons, unity in Essence, and equality in Majesty may be adored: which the Angels and Archangels, the Cherubim also and Seraphim praise; who cease not daily to cry out with one voice: saying,

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus, Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of hosts. Full are the heavens and the earth of Thy glory; Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord: Hosanna in the heights.

DOMINICAN RITE.

At the *Sanctus* an extra candle is lit at the side of the altar, and remains lighted until after the priest's Communion.

CHAPTER XV

THE INTERESTS OF JESUS

HAVE you ever been near enough to the altar to see the Missal when the priest turns over the page after the *Sanctus?* There is always a large picture of the Crucifixion facing the prayers which follow, the first word of which is " Te." Capital T represents a cross, and some people think that the cross on which our divine Lord died was shaped like a Greek letter T. The monks who, in olden times, wrote and illuminated the Missals, took a special delight in ornamenting this Cross-letter, and very often the illumination took the form of the figure of Jesus crucified. This was sometimes so large that it was put on a separate page, as in our Missals now.

From the *Sanctus* to the *Pater noster* is called the Canon of the Mass. Various reasons have been given. The word " canon " means a rule, and this part of the Holy Mass is said according to a fixed rule, with very little change; whereas some other parts change every day, as we have seen. This is one explanation, and perhaps the most common.

The Preface was a solemn thanksgiving prayer; the Canon is a solemn prayer of intercession.

The priest asks God to accept these " gifts," these " presents," these " holy, unspotted

sacrifices." While saying these words he makes the Sign of the Cross three times over the Host and chalice.

He offers them to God for those great interests so dear to the Sacred Heart of our divine Lord, and first for His Church, that Church called in such a special manner His Spouse.

I want you to accustom yourselves to have great big devotions, nothing less than the interests of our Lord Himself. Some people seem to dwarf themselves with all kinds of little things. I remember reading somewhere a story about this. A lady told a priest she thought of starting a devotion of the seven Wednesdays in honour of something, I forget what, and she said she felt sure it would be popular. The priest answered he wished that someone would start a devotion to the fifty-two Sundays and make that popular. You see the Sunday Mass is a big thing.

The Church is the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and you should pray much for it. You pray, or you may do so, for the Church every time you say: "Thy kingdom come."

Father Faber wrote a book called "All for Jesus"; it is one which some of you will like to read. The first chapter is entitled "The Interests of Jesus." In the course of it he says:

"The Church on earth is the fighting part of the Church. . . . The interests of Jesus are rich and plentiful enough here. . . . There is not a thing which has not two sides, and one side

belongs to Jesus, and the other side is against Him. . . . There is not a public-house . . . not a theatre . . . not a ballroom or a concert, not a public meeting or a parliament, not a shop or a wharf, not a fair, a race-course or a market, not a carriage or a ship, not a school or a church, where His interests are not in danger at all hours, and where He is not calling on us to help Him. . . . There are things to be done, and things to be left undone. . . . There is so much to do, the puzzle is where to begin and what to do first. . . . The Church on earth is the fighting part of the Church, no wonder there is so much to do."

When praying for the Church our thoughts turn naturally to its Head, the Vicar of Christ, our holy Father the Pope, whose name comes in the Canon thus, "Together with Thy servant, Benedict, our Pope." When the holy Father is himself saying Mass, instead of these words, he says: "And with me, Thine unworthy servant."

Next comes the name of the Bishop in whose diocese we live. He, like the Pope, changes the wording in the same way when saying Mass himself.

The prayer goes on with a petition for all the members of God's Church. It is a great comfort to think that as Catholics we share in every Mass said throughout the world, and Holy Mass is always being offered up somewhere on our earth.

You remember the prophecy: "From the

rising of the sun even to the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation" (Mal. i. 11).

When, in your morning prayer, you make the intention of gaining all the indulgences you can, add that of offering to God all the Masses which shall be said throughout the world during the course of the day; offer them for our Lord's intentions and yours. This was a favourite devotion of St. Leonard of Port Maurice:

THE CANON OF THE MASS.

Te igitur, clementissime Pater, per Jesum Christum Filium tuum Dominum nostrum, supplices rogamus, ac petimus (*osculatur altare*) uti accepta habeas, et benedicas hæc ✠ dona, hæc ✠ munera, hæc ✠ sancta sacrificia illibata; in primis, quæ tibi offerimus pro Ecclesia tua sancta catholica; quam pacificare, custodire, adunare, et regere digneris toto orbe terrarum: una cum famulo tuo Papa nostro *N.*, et Antistite nostro *N.*, et omnibus orthodoxis atque catholicæ, et apostolicæ fidei cultoribus.

We humbly pray and beseech Thee, therefore, most merciful Father, through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord, that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to accept and bless these ✠ gifts, these ✠ presents, these ✠ holy, unspotted sacrifices, which in the first place we offer Thee for Thy holy Catholic Church, to which vouchsafe to grant peace; as also to preserve, unite, and govern it throughout the world, together with Thy servant our Pope, *N.*, and our Bishop, *N.*, as also all orthodox believers and professors of the Catholic and Apostolic Faith.

CHAPTER XVI

MY LITTLE BEDESMEN

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE LIVING.

Memento, Domine, famulorum, famularumque tuarum *N.* et *N.*	Be mindful, O Lord, of Thy servants, men and women, *N.* and *N.*

The Priest joins his hands, and prays silently for those he intends to pray for.

Et omnium circumstantium, quorum tibi fides cognita est, et nota devotio, pro quibus tibi offerimus: vel qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium laudis, pro se, suisque omnibus: pro redemptione animarum suarum, pro spe salutis, et incolumitatis suæ: tibique reddunt vota sua æterno Deo, vivo et vero.	And of all here present, whose faith and devotion are known unto Thee; for whom we offer, or who offer up to Thee this sacrifice of praise for themselves, their families, and friends, for the hope of their safety and salvation, and who pay their vows to Thee, the eternal, living, and true God.

THIS prayer is called the Memento for the Living, from the first Latin word, which means "remember." If a priest promises to make a Memento for you in his Mass, he means that he will name you, or think of you, in a special manner at this very solemn part of the Holy Sacrifice, which is a great privilege.

Does it remind you of the first Good Friday, when on the Cross our Lord was offering up His

Sacrifice, and the good thief asked Him for a Memento? "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

Notice in the prayer the two capital letters, *N. et N.* They have a history which will interest you.

In the early days of the Church, tablets folded in two were in use. On them were written in two columns lists of names.

In the first column came the names of those living who had a special claim upon the prayers of the congregation. Those we have mentioned in the last chapter—the Pope, the Bishop. Then followed the names of those for whose special intention the Holy Mass was being offered, the benefactors of the Church, and those who contributed to the support of the priests.

It was strictly forbidden to receive gifts from those who were not living the lives of practical Catholics, and it was also forbidden to put their names on the sacred tablets, no matter how great or how rich such people might be. To have one's name effaced was a very great disgrace and serious punishment.

At this point in the service the deacon at a High Mass went to the ambo, or pulpit, from which the Epistle was read, and gave out the names on the tablets, or diptychs as they were called. At a Low Mass the priest faced the people and read them out himself.

Unfortunately, we are so weak and sinful that we are able to turn even the holiest things

to our hurt. St. Jerome tells us that some of the faithful offered gifts out of vanity, and only in order to hear their names read out publicly in the church.

Perhaps it was on this account that a change gradually came about. First, instead of the names being read out loud, the deacon read them in a low voice to the priest saying the Mass, and later still the custom ceased altogether. The two letters, *N*, *N*, remain to remind us where they were formerly read.

In England these lists were called "bede-rolls." The word "bede" means a prayer, and it is from this word that our rosaries came to be called beads. It should be spelt "bedes." We had the old word bedesman, meaning one who received some benefit, and in return was bound to pray for the giver. Welsh readers will like to know that Bettws, found in so many names of their towns, is a form of the word bede. Now if this book helps you to understand and so love better the Holy Mass, that will be a benefit. In return, will you be my bedesmen?

I want you to notice how the Church keeps bringing forward again and again those thoughts she does not want us to lose sight of. She reminds us here, as she did at the *Orate Fratres*, that the sacrifice is ours as well as the priest's. "For whom we offer, or who offer to Thee," says the prayer we are talking about. The meaning really is: "For whom we offer and who offer to Thee."

Then, again, the ends of Holy Mass are

brought forward. "This sacrifice of praise"—that is, homage.

"For the redemption of their souls"—that is, the thought of atonement.

"For the health and welfare they hope for"—those two words, "health and welfare," cover all we may want to ask for soul or body; that is, petition.

The word "vows" used in this prayer is not intended in its strict sense, but as meaning "good desires." All my readers who are learning French can compare it with the French use of the word on a feast day.

CHAPTER XVII

WITH THE SAINTS

Communicantes, et memoriam venerantes, in primis gloriosæ semper Virginis Mariæ, Genitricis Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi: sed et beatorum. Apostolorum ac Martyrum tuorum, Petri et Pauli, Andreæ, Jacobi, Joannis, Thomæ, Jacobi, Philippi, Bartholomæi, Matthæi, Simonis et Thaddæi: Lini, Cleti, Clementis, Xysti, Cornelii, Cypriani, Laurentii, Chrysogoni, Joannis et Pauli, Cosmæ et Damiani: et omnium Sanctorum tuorum; quorum meritis precibusque concedas, ut in omnibus protectionis tuæ muniamur auxilio. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Communicating with, and honouring in the first place the memory of the glorious and ever Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord and God Jesus Christ; as also of the blessed Apostles and Martyrs, Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Thaddeus, Linus, Cletus, Clement, Xystus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian, and of all Thy Saints; by whose merits and prayers grant that we may be always defended by the help of Thy protection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

IN the last two chapters we have been speaking of the prayers which bring very clearly before our minds the words of the Catechism, explaining how the faithful on earth are in communion with each other, " by assist-

ing each other with their prayers and good works."

The next answer says: " We are in communion with the Saints in heaven by honouring them as the glorified members of the Church, and also by our praying to them and by their praying for us." The Saints in heaven form what we call the Church triumphant. The prayer of the Mass which we have now reached places us in communion with those whose fighting is over, and who have won the palm of victory.

This prayer has a slight addition referring to the event we are celebrating on five great feasts of the year—namely, Christmas, the Epiphany, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. For example, on Ascension Day, and during the Octave, we have the following very beautiful words inserted:

" Communicating with and celebrating the most sacred day on which our Lord, Thy only-begotten Son, placed at the right Hand of Thy glory our frail nature which He had united to Himself."

In its ordinary form the name of our blessed Lady comes first with her great title, Mother of God, followed by a long list of twenty-four names. There are the twelve Apostles, but with the name of St. Paul instead of that of Judas. You will notice that the Missal does not follow the order of any of the four lists given in the New Testament (St. Matt. x. 3; St. Mark iii. 16; St. Luke vi. 14; Acts i. 13).

These are followed by the names of twelve martyrs, the first five of whom were Popes. The list includes the favourite martyr St. Laurence and two sets of brothers. The second pair, SS. Cosmas and Damian, were doctors.

It was not until the fourth century that the Church instituted feasts for any other class of Saints than martyrs, and the fact that this list contains no name of a Saint of other rank is a proof of its great age.

Have you ever thought of making a list of the Saints named daily at Holy Mass? I am giving it to you now, and I want to make a suggestion. Take them one at a time and try to find out something for yourselves about each. You can tick them off in your book as you do them. This will provide you with a little course of reading and research in which you will soon grow interested. Among other books which will help you will be your Bible, the "Catholic Encyclopædia," and Butler's "Lives of the Saints."

SAINTS IN THE ORDINARY OF THE MASS.

1 Our Blessed Lady (*mentioned three times*).
2 St. John the Baptist (*three times*).
3 St. Peter (*three times*).
4 St. Paul (*three times*).
5 St. Michael.
6 Isaias.
7 St. Andrew.
8 St. James.
9 St. John.
10 St. Thomas.
11 St. James.
12 St. Philip.
13 St. Bartholomew.
14 St. Matthew.
15 St. Simon.
16 St. Thaddeus.
17 St. Linus.
18 St. Cletus.

19 St. Clement.
20 St. Xystus.
21 St. Cornelius.
22 St. Cyprian.
23 St. Lawrence.
24 St. Chrysogonus.
25 St. John.
26 St. Paul.
27 St. Cosmas.
28 St. Damian.
29 Abel.
30 Abraham.
31 Melchisedech.
32 St. Stephen.
33 St. Mathias.
34 St. Barnabas.
35 St. Ignatius.
36 St. Alexander.
37 St. Marcellinus.
38 St. Peter.
39 St. Felicitas.
40 St. Perpetua.
41 St. Agatha.
42 St. Lucy.
43 St. Agnes.
44 St. Cecilia.
45 St. Anastasia.

CHAPTER XVIII

WHEN CHRIST IS KING

When the Priest spreads his hands over the oblation he says :

Hanc igitur oblationem servitutis nostræ, sed et cunctæ familiæ tuæ, quæsumus Domine, ut placatus accipias: diesque nostros in tua pace disponas, atque ab æterna damnatione nos eripi, et in electorum tuorum jubeas grege numerari: Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

We, therefore, beseech Thee, O Lord, graciously to accept this oblation of our service, as also of Thy whole family; dispose our days in Thy peace, command us to be delivered from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the flock of Thy elect. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SEVERAL times already we have noticed the ceremonies connected with Holy Mass, and now we have a very significant one. When the priest begins this prayer he spreads out his hands over the bread and wine, crossing the two thumbs so as to form a cross.

In the days before our divine Lord came, the priest was ordered " to put his hand on the head of the victim " he was going to offer in sacrifice. We are told that this signified the wish to lay upon it the sins for which the victim was to die instead of the sinner.

Our Lord is about to become our Victim on the altar, and the priest holds his hands above the offering which in a few moments will be

changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

It is to warn us that this solemn moment is approaching that the server in some churches rings a bell at this point. On three feasts there is a slight variation made in the wording of this prayer—namely, on Holy Thursday, Easter Sunday, and Pentecost.

It begins by calling the Holy Sacrifice the "Oblation of our service." Now there are three kinds of service—that of slaves, of servants, and of friends. Which kind is ours going to be?

The slave gives his service for fear of punishment. I think we might compare this to the service we offer God when we go to Mass on Sunday or Holiday of Obligation only because we are bound under pain of mortal sin, and we fear that sin's proper punishment. It is service, but it is the lowest kind.

The servant gives his service for payment. Sometimes we go to Holy Mass, not out of fear, but in order to receive something in return. When, for instance, we go to pray for success in some undertaking. Of course, I do not want you to think that this is in any way wrong. It is quite right, but it is not the highest thing.

There is a service of friendship which is offered out of love for our friend. When we go to Mass to please our Lord, out of love for Him, in order to be near Him and to join with Him in the offering of His great Sacrifice, that, you can see, is more perfect service than that which

is offered out of fear or in the hope of some benefit for ourselves. Let us try to mean this kind when we say to Him: "This, then, the oblation of our service, and of that of Thy whole family, we beseech Thee, O Lord, mercifully to accept." In this prayer you are again reminded that the Church bids you pray for great things. You may pray, too, for quite small ones. Our dear Lord is so loving that He will hear you gladly; but He is pleased when He sees His children growing reasonable, and able to understand that it is the great big things for our souls which, after all, must come first.

The Church now asks three things from God for us:

Dispose our days in Thy peace.

Bid us be preserved from everlasting damnation.

And to be numbered among the flock of Thine elect.

It is sometimes said that the young do not understand the blessing of peace. I do not think that this is true. Quite probably your first trouble came from something which strained your happy peaceful relations with your mother, or from wrongdoing known only to yourself, but which made you miserable because you were no longer at peace with God. Peace is our Lord's own gift to us. At the end of His life He said to His Apostles: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." It is one of the things most to be coveted now

and for your life in the days to come. How can you make sure of it? Can you have it, even if time brings like a flood into your lives pain, sorrow, misfortune, and disappointment?

Yes, you can. You need fear nothing life can bring; nothing need rob your soul of its peace. If only you will see to it all your life through that Jesus Christ is really King, enthroned in the centre of your heart, then peace will be there, too, in spite of all outside strife. None can dethrone Him but yourself. No outside foe can drag Him from the golden throne of your pure and loving heart. Only mortal sin can completely dethrone the Prince of Peace. When you say these words, "Bid us be preserved from everlasting damnation," you can make them into a little prayer for grace not to commit mortal sin. Do you remember the verse in the *Dies iræ*, the Sequence said in Mass for the Dead:

> Think, 'twas I, my lost condition,
> Caused, O pitying Lord, Thy mission.
> Spare my soul that day's perdition.
>
> Seeking me Thy footsteps hasted,
> Me to save, the Cross was tasted,
> Be not toil so mighty wasted.

Lastly, you ask to be numbered among the flock of God's elect. You have the same petition in the *Te Deum*:

"Make us to be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting."

The grace to persevere to the end in God's

service is His gift. We can never earn it, but we can win God's Heart by fervent prayer, and no prayer has such power as that which is offered at Holy Mass.

DOMINICAN RITE.

A Dominican priest does not spread his hands over the oblation.

CHAPTER XIX

YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE

Quam oblationem tu Deus in omnibus, quæsumus ✠ benedictam ✠ adscriptam ✠ ratam, rationabilem, acceptabilemque facere digneris: ut nobis ✠ Corpus, et ✠ Sanguis fiat dilectissimi Filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi.

Which oblation do Thou, O God, vouchsafe in all things to make ✠ blessed, ✠ approved ✠ ratified, reasonable, and acceptable, that it may become to us the ✠ Body and ✠ Blood of Thy most beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

THIS is the last of the five prayers which go before the Consecration. If you read it over carefully I think you will feel that it is rather difficult to understand what some of the words mean. I daresay you will be quite pleased to know that even learned people who explain these things to us think it difficult as well as you. I will tell you some of the easiest explanations about it.

First, I want you to notice a little ceremony. The priest makes five Signs of the Cross while he is saying this prayer, as they are marked above for you. The first three are made over the Host and chalice together, one over the Host separately, and one over the chalice separately.

Several meanings have been given to these crosses by different writers. Some think that the first three are in honour of the Holy Trinity,

and the last two in honour of the two natures of our blessed Lord. Others think that they are in memory of His five sacred Wounds. This last is a very easy explanation to remember, because we cannot think of the Holy Mass without thinking of Jesus crucified.

Now let us look at the wording of the prayer, and try to understand something about it.

We asked God in the prayer before this one to accept the oblation of our service—we meant the offering we were making of the bread and wine, so soon to be changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Now we ask Him to do with this oblation a number of things.

First, to make it blessed, to make it holy. The word to "bless" comes from two Latin words, and means to speak well. There is a little prayer which the Church uses to our blessed Lady in which we ask her to speak good things for us when she stands in the presence of God.

Is it not a wonderful thing to think of our Lord and His holy Mother speaking good things for us, or about us. In a few minutes our divine Lord is going to speak for us the best of all good things. He is going to speak those wonder-working words which will change the bread and wine into His own Body and Blood, and make the oblation blessed and holy in the grandest of all ways.

There is a great lesson, and one very dear to the Sacred Heart, which the word "bless" might suggest to us. Are we always speaking good things of other people? Or are we very quick

and clever in seeing the weakness, the sin, and the evil in other souls, and being very blind to all the good there?

It is said of St. Teresa that absent people were quite safe if she was in a room, because she would never allow anything unkind to be said of them.

There is so much good in every soul that God has made. The gentle St. Thomas Aquinas found a sort of good even in sin. And if you will begin now to fix your eyes firmly on the good, and be blind to the bad side of your fellow-beings, it will make you so happy and lovable, such a scatterer of sunshine and sweetness around you.

Make up your mind never to say anything unkind of anyone, but to find something nice to mention of all—there always is something.

I once heard a story which I will share with you:

Long, long ago, in the days when our blessed Lord lived in this world and trod the roads of the Holy Land, there was in a certain village a dog. He was not a beautiful dog, either in looks or in character, but a poor little mongrel, and he belonged to nobody. No one cared for him and no one fed him, and so he was always stealing, which made him disliked by the people. He was always quarrelling and trying to take away the bones which other dogs had, and that made him disliked by other dogs.

To be always hungry does not improve the

temper, and when the boys and girls wanted to play with him, he was cross and bit them. So he was not even loved by the little children. One day this poor dog was run over and killed.

As in every part of the world, a crowd quickly gathered round the spot, and each one had something to say.

"Well, it's a good thing he's dead; he was no good to anyone."

"The village is well rid of the ugly brute."

"He was always quarrelling."

"He stole my meat only last week."

And so on.

At last a gentle voice was heard saying: "Look what beautiful teeth the poor thing has."

A man in the crowd turned round quickly, crying:

"The Prophet! The great Prophet is here!"

Only Jesus of Nazareth could find any good to say of that dead dog.

I know we all like that story. Let us make a resolution that we will try to be more like Jesus of Nazareth, and find something good to say of everyone. At this part of the Mass let us ask God for the gift of perfect charity.

The next word in the prayer is approved or established. We ask God to regard our gift as inviolably dedicated to His service in the way He ordained and established: "Do this in commemoration of Me."

"Ratified." When we use this word, at once

we think of rolls of parchment with mysterious seals, ratifying a bond entered into between two parties. The Holy Mass is a solemn bond entered into between God and His people. There is a beautiful text in the Bible which says: "Set me as a seal upon thy heart." The Sacred Host reminds us in many ways of a seal.

"Reasonable." In the Old Testament we can read of the sacrifices offered to God. They were all of things without reason—flour, oil, wine, sheep, etc. In the Holy Mass we offer God the Son, the Eternal Wisdom, and to His infinite sacrifice we join our own poor offering. St. Paul, in writing to the Romans, says: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies, a living sacrifice pleasing to God, your reasonable service" (Rom. xii. 1).

"Acceptable." That is, pleasing to God. This makes our thoughts fly back to the *Orate fratres*, when the priest turned round and said to us: "Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty." We know that our Lord is always pleasing to His heavenly Father. But we are not. It is a good place to recall all wandering thoughts to renew our fervour and attention to the great act in which we are joining.

The Church, in this prayer, is asking God for the most wonderful miracle. St. Thomas Aquinas calls it the greatest of all God's

miracles. You could not imagine the Church making phrases over that. In one sentence of grandest simplicity we ask for that miracle of Transubstantiation. "That it may become to us the Body and Blood of Thy most beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." Think for one moment of the most startling petition you could present to an earthly king. Then try to word it as this is worded, and you will perhaps realise in some small measure the magnitude of the favour you ask with such utter informality at the hands of the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

CHAPTER XX

THE WONDER PAGE

WE have now together reached that wonderful page which made me call the Missal "God's Wonder Book." We have now come to the actual words which give us, in place of the bread and wine we offered, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ upon our altars, the words which continue in our churches the Sacrifice of Calvary, and give us Jesus as our Victim, our Host.

Saints have written words about this part of the Mass which glow with love and beauty like some tender lyric. St. John Chrysostom says:

"O priests, do you think that you are still on the earth, or do you not rather believe that you are lifted up to heaven? O miracle! O goodness! He who is seated at the right hand of the Father will in an instant be in our very hands, and about to give Himself to those who wish to receive Him."

The first thing which strikes you in reading this prayer is the abrupt change in the form.

Qui pridie quam pateretur, accepit panem in sanctas, ac venerabiles manus suas; et elevatis oculis in cœlum ad te Deum Patrem suum omnipotentem, tibi gratias agens, benedixit, fregit

Who the day before He suffered, took bread (*he takes the Host*) into His holy and venerable hands (*he raises his eyes to heaven*), and with His eyes lifted up towards heaven, to God, His Al-

deditque discipulis suis, dicens: Accipite, et manducate ex hoc omnes: HOC EST ENIM CORPUS MEUM.

mighty Father, giving thanks to Thee, did bless, break, and give to His disciples, saying, "Take, and eat ye all of This; FOR THIS IS MY BODY."

Think of the *Confiteor*, of the *Kyrie*, the *Orate fratres*, the Prayers of Intercession for the living and the dead. The priest in all of them prays in his own name, exercises his own office. Now his personality seems to retire. He moves aside to give place to Jesus Christ, who is the chief and eternal Priest at every Mass. He has been hidden behind the person of His minister; now, as it were, He comes forward to officiate.

At the Consecration our Lord simply uses the mouth and hands of the priest, who no longer speaks in his own name, but in the person of Jesus Christ. "THIS IS MY BODY."

The Curé of Ars said that if we had faith we should see Jesus in His priest like a flame through a crystal.

Before beginning this part of the Mass the priest rubs his thumbs and his index fingers on the corporal lest the slightest impurity should adhere to them. This reminds us of the purity of body and soul which is required for handling the things of God.

Thomas à Kempis, in the part of the "Imitation of Christ" dealing with the Blessed Sacrament, says of the priest: "Pure and lifted to heaven should be the hands which are used to

handle the Creator of heaven and earth" (Book IV., Chapter XI.).

I think that if you would read this book carefully you would find it very helpful in making your soul grow in reverence for the Blessed Sacrament and the priesthood. Young people in France know their "Imitation" better than those in England, I fancy.

The priest first tells the story of that wonderful night of the Last Supper. Not every word of the narrative, as given in the Missal, is to be found in the New Testament. I am giving you at the end of this chapter (p. 84) the four accounts which God has had written for us in the Holy Bible, because I want you to go away quietly by yourself and study this chapter. The presence of Jesus on the altar is the thing that matters most to you in the whole world, and it should be your loving ambition to know about it everything you possibly can.

Now you can see what we have from the New Testament and what has come to us from the tradition of the Church. You notice that St. John does not give an account of the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament.

Now look carefully at the wording. In the Missal you have the word "day" instead of "night."

The Church has added what is clearly understood in the Gospel that it was into His holy and venerable Hands that our Lord took the bread.

No Gospel account tells us that Jesus lifted His eyes to heaven on this occasion, but there

is a tradition that He always did so before performing any very solemn act. St. Matthew tells us He did when He worked the miracle of multiplying the loaves and fishes—a miracle which was a type of the Holy Eucharist.

" He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude " (xiv. 19).

St. John notices the same act at the raising of Lazarus from the dead. " And Jesus lifting up His eyes " (xi. 41).

The Greek word for giving thanks has given to the Blessed Sacrament one of its names—Eucharist.

The word " for " placed before " This is My Body " is not in the Scriptures.

As soon as the priest has said these words, our Lord is there upon the altar, all His majesty, all His glory, His very human form, hidden for love of us under the appearance of that little round, white Host. We see no change, but we have Christ's own word that change there has been, and to protect from irreverence that tiny Host there is not one of us who would not joyfully lay down his life.

The words of Consecration said, the priest genuflects, and adores the great God who at that moment rests between his hands.

Then he raises It above his head that It may be seen by all and worshipped.

Afterwards, placing the Host reverently upon the corporal, he genuflects again.

Our Catholic forefathers in the Middle Ages had a great devotion to looking upon the sacred Host, and a bell was rung just before the Consecration to give warning that that solemn moment was at hand. Those near came in for the Elevation, and those too far away knelt for a moment to adore.

What will, I know, surprise you is to hear that in quite early times what is now so striking a feature of Holy Mass was unknown. There was then no Elevation following the Consecration at all. There was what we now call the Little Elevation, which, I do not suppose, you have ever noticed, and which we shall speak of later on.

Pope Pius X. granted an indulgence to us for looking up at the sacred Host and at the chalice when they are elevated, and saying at the same time the words: " My Lord and my God."

St. Matthew xxvi. 26.	St. Mark xiv. 22.	St. Luke xxii. 19.	1 Corinthians xi. 23.	Missal.
"And whilst they were at supper Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to His disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat, THIS IS MY BODY."	"And whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessing, broke and gave to them and said: Take ye, THIS IS MY BODY."	"And taking bread, He gave thanks, and brake and gave to them saying: THIS IS MY BODY which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me."	"The Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said: Take ye and eat, THIS IS MY BODY, which shall be delivered for you. This do for the commemoration of Me."	"Who the day before he suffered took bread into His holy and venerable hands, and with His eyes lifted up towards heaven, giving thanks to Thee, Almighty God, His Father, He blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying: Take and eat ye all of this, FOR THIS IS MY BODY."

CHAPTER XXI

THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

Simili modo postquam cœnatum est, accipiens et hunc præclarum Calicem in sanctas, ac venerabiles manus suas: item tibi gratias agens, benedixit, deditque discipulis suis, dicens: Accipite, et bibite ex eo omnes: HIC EST ENIM CALIX SANGUINIS MEI, NOVI ET ÆTERNI TESTAMENTI: MYSTERIUM FIDEI: QUI PRO VOBIS ET PRO MULTIS EFFUNDETUR IN REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM.

Hæc quotiescumque feceritis, in mei memoriam facietis.

In like manner, after He had supped, taking also this excellent Chalice into His holy and venerable hands, and giving Thee thanks, He blessed, and gave to His disciples, saying: Take and drink ye all of This: FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL TESTAMENT; THE MYSTERY OF FAITH; WHICH SHALL BE SHED FOR YOU, AND FOR MANY, TO THE REMISSION OF SINS.

As often as ye do these things, ye shall do them in remembrance of Me.

As soon as the priest has laid the sacred Host on the corporal, he puts his thumbs and index fingers together, and only uncloses them to touch the Blessed Sacrament until he washes them at the ablution of the chalice.

Much of what I have said to you about the Consecration of the bread applies to the Consecration of the wine.

The priest takes the chalice into both hands and says over it the words of Consecration.

St. Matthew xxvi. 27, 28.	St. Mark xiv. 23, 24.	St. Luke xxii. 20.	1 Corinthians xi. 23.	Missal.
"And taking the chalice He gave thanks, and gave to them saying: Drink ye all of this FOR THIS IS MY BLOOD of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins."	"And having taken the chalice, giving thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And He said to them: THIS IS MY BLOOD of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many."	"In like manner the chalice also, after He had supped, saying THIS IS THE CHALICE, THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD, which shall be shed for you."	"In like manner also the chalice after He had supped, saying THIS CHALICE IS THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD: This do ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of Me."	"In like manner after supper, taking this excellent chalice in His sacred and venerable hands, giving Thee also thanks, He blessed it, and gave it to His disciples saying: Take and drink ye all of this FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, of the New and everlasting Testament, a Mystery of Faith, which shall be shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. As often as ye shall do these things ye shall do them in remembrance of Me."

I am giving you, as I did before, the forms found in St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. Paul. You can compare them and see how and in what they vary.

You will notice some words in the Missal not found in Holy Scripture: "This excellent," before the word chalice. "In His sacred and venerable hands." "He blessed it." "Everlasting," before Testament. The very beautiful phrase giving us a new name for the Blessed Sacrament: "The Mystery of Faith."

If, later on, difficulties about the Blessed Sacrament should ever come to you, you could bow your head and say to yourself: "Mysterium fidei."

St. Thomas Aquinas expresses this in his hymns. In the *Tantum ergo*, at Benediction, you sing:

> "Faith for all defects supplying
> When the feeble senses fail."

In the *Lauda Sion*, sung at Mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi, he says:

> "Sight hath failed, nor thought conceiveth
> But a dauntless faith believeth."

We know that Christ is received whole and entire under the form of bread as well as under that of wine. But St. Thomas says that the Precious Blood reminds us more forcibly of His Passion and Death, and so it is suitable that we should have words at the Consecration of the chalice which remind us that the remission of

sins is bought for us by the shedding of the Precious Blood, the price of our redemption.

It is the double Consecration which gives to the Holy Mass its character of a sacrifice. By it our Lord is mystically slain. He appears as if slain by the seeming separation of the Blood from the Body which in a human being results in death. I have explained this elsewhere for you.*

As soon as the priest has said the words " for the remission of sins," he places the chalice on the corporal, kneels down and adores the Precious Blood, saying at the same time the words: " As often as ye shall do these things, ye shall do them in remembrance of Me."

The command of our blessed Lord to " Do this " made the Apostles priests. It is the grace of the Sacrament of Holy Orders which gives to a priest the power to perform his sacred duties. God never commands us to do anything without giving us the necessary graces. All through life the knowledge of that truth is a great comfort to us.

The priest then elevates the chalice that we, too, may adore.

I told you that there was not always an elevation following the Consecration of the sacred Host; the practice of elevating the chalice was still later. The reason of this is easy to understand. When the Host is raised we really see the Blessed Sacrament, but we

* Behold the Lamb.

do not see the Precious Blood at the elevation of the chalice.

After elevating it the priest puts the chalice on the corporal and covers it with the pall.

In some churches an extra candle is lit out of respect for the presence of Jesus on the altar, and put out after the Communion.

If you kneel where you can see the altar, you will notice that the assistant, or the server, raises the priest's chasuble during the elevation. At one time this was quite necessary. When the chasuble came to the ground all round it had to be held up to free the priest's arms. There is a picture of one of these immense chasubles in another Corpus Christi book.*

DOMINICAN RITE.

A Dominican priest says, "As often as ye shall do these things ye shall do them in commemoration of Me," only when after the people's adoration he puts the chalice down upon the corporal.

* Master, where dwellest Thou ?

CHAPTER XXII

CALLING TO MIND

OUR dear Lord, when giving us the Holy Mass, bade us celebrate it in memory of Him. "As often as ye shall do these things, you shall do them in memory of Me."

Jesus is now on the altar; the sacred Host lies on the corporal, the Precious Blood is in the chalice, and the priest proceeds immediately to obey that loving command. He calls to mind the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ.

Unde et memores, Domine, nos servi tui, sed et plebs tua sancta, ejusdem Christi Filii tui Domini nostri tam beatæ Passionis, necnon et ab inferis Resurrectionis, sed et in cœlos gloriosæ Ascensionis: offerimus præclaræ majestati tuæ de tuis donis, ac datis, Hostiam puram, Hostiam sanctam, Hostiam immaculatam, Panem sanctum vitæ æternæ, et Calicem salutis perpetuæ.

Wherefore, O Lord, we Thy servants, as also Thy holy people, calling to mind the blessed Passion of the same Christ, Thy Son our Lord, His Resurrection from the dead, and glorious Ascension into heaven, offer unto Thy most excellent Majesty, of Thy gifts and grants, a pure Host, a holy Host, an immaculate Host, the holy Bread of eternal life, and the Chalice of everlasting salvation.

During the first part of this prayer the priest holds his hands raised.

Sometimes when you want to make a little change in your devotions, or you find that

your thoughts are wandering, you might here read one of the Gospel accounts of the Passion, or you could say the Sorrowful Mysteries of your Rosary.

The Church has so many beautiful lessons for us in the Holy Mass that you and I can go on learning all our lives if we will.

We have just got our Lord on the altar, and quickly the Church teaches us what to do—"Offer to Thy most excellent Majesty of Thine own Gifts bestowed upon us."

You and I have our little gifts—strength or beauty of body, powers of mind, firmness of will. They are all little, but they have been given to us by God, that our hands may not be quite empty when He comes to visit us, now in Holy Communion, and when one day in the future He sends His Angel, Death, to fetch us to visit Him in His own Home.

Your Morning Offering teaches you to give to God your whole life with all its activities, so you should make it very fervently. During the day at work, or pleasure, you can say to Jesus the words which come later in the Mass: "What shall I give back to the Lord for all He has given to me?" And answer: "Dear Lord, I will give you this action. I will do it for you alone, and I will put into it my very best." This is what grown-ups mean by purity of intention.

If there is some little sacrifice you know you ought to make, this would be a very nice part of the Mass at which to promise God you will

not shirk making it. Having named the great Gift, " The holy bread . . . the chalice of salvation," go on and tell God of the little gift you are adding of your own, perhaps owning up to something, or saying that you are sorry. When the priest gets to the words, " bestowed upon us," he joins his hands, and then, saying " a pure Host, a holy Host, an unspotted Host," he makes the Sign of the Cross three times over the Host and chalice. At the words " the holy bread," he makes it over the Host alone, and then over the chalice alone at the words, " the chalice of salvation."

St. Thomas Aquinas says that these five crosses put us in mind of the five wounds Jesus bore in His holy Body for us, and through them poured out His Precious Blood to wash away our sins.

If we are going to unite our offering to that of our dear Lord we must try to make it like His. Notice the words the priest uses to describe it, " pure, holy, unspotted."

" Pure " means free from any stain, properly prepared before being offered to God. Suppose you go to your prayers and right up to the end of your Sign of the Cross you are thinking about wrong or useless things, your offering is not properly prepared, it is stained with things of earth, it is not pure.

Our offering must be holy. We could not dare to offer to God a wicked thing, a bad Communion, an untruthful Confession, a spiteful action. It must be something entirely con-

secrated to God, it must not be a service rendered grudgingly; it should not be a Sunday Mass when we get in during the Gospel and come out as soon as the priest has received Holy Communion.

Lastly, let it be without blemish, spotless. Give to God your best; don't put Him off with mutilated offerings; don't give Him the rubbish of your life.

DOMINICAN RITE.

At the beginning of this prayer a Dominican priest stretches out his arms wide as the arms of our Saviour were extended upon the Cross. A Carmelite does the same. It is very dramatic, and brings back forcibly to us a truth we know quite well and realise very little—namely, that the Holy Mass is one and the same Sacrifice with that of Calvary.

CHAPTER XXIII

BIBLE STORIES

Supra quæ propitio ac sereno vultu respicere digneris: et accepta habere, sicuti accepta habere dignatus es munera pueri tui justi Abel, et sacrificium patriarchæ nostri Abrahæ: et quod tibi obtulit summus sacerdos tuus Melchisedech, sanctum sacrificium, immaculatam hostiam.

Upon which vouchsafe to look with a propitious and serene countenance, and to accept them, as Thou wast graciously pleased to accept the gifts of Thy just servant Abel, and the sacrifice of our Patriarch Abraham, and that which Thy high Priest Melchisedech offered to Thee, a Holy Sacrifice, an Immaculate Host.

IN this prayer we ask God to accept with pleasure the Gift we are offering to Him. Perhaps you will think that petition rather strange. Are you saying to yourself, "But the Gift we are offering is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, surely we do not need to ask that God would look favourably upon that? Jesus is always pleasing to His Father." That is quite true, but there is not only the Gift to consider but the giver. That wonderful Gift is offered to God through the hands of poor and worthless sinners, and we therefore beseech God to look favourably on what is offered by such unworthy hands; to look at the Gift and not at us.

In the Psalms the Church sings: " Behold, O God, our Protector, and look on the face of Thy Christ " (Ps. lxxxiii. 10).

We remind God how pleased He was in days of old with the sacrifices which were offered to Him, though they were only shadows, or, as we call them, types, of the great Sacrifice to come.

Often I have told you that the Church is your Mother, and, like a mother, she knows just what will help you to raise your mind and heart to God—that is, to pray.

Now every proper kind of person loves Bible stories, and three beautiful ones are here brought to your mind. If you are rather tired of saying prayers, you can stop here and think of these stories.

First, you are reminded of Abel. You can have the very words which are in God's holy Book, the Bible, at the beginning of which there is a chapter which is called, " The Story of Cain and Abel."

Abel was a shepherd, and Cain a tiller of the ground.

And it came to pass after many days that Cain offered, of the fruits of the earth, gifts to the Lord.

Abel also offered of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord had respect to Abel and his offerings.

But to Cain and his offerings He had no respect. And Cain was exceeding angry, and his countenance fell.

And the Lord said to him: " Why art thou angry ? and why is thy countenance fallen ? If thou do well, shalt thou not receive ? but if ill, shall not sin be forthwith present at the door ? but the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it."

And Cain said to Abel his brother: " Let us go forth abroad." And when they were in the field Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and slew him.

And the Lord said to Cain: " Where is thy brother Abel ?"

And he answered: " I know not. Am I my brother's keeper ?" (Gen. iv. 2-9).

Abel offered to God a little lamb, and Jesus who is offered up in the Holy Mass is the Lamb of God. Do you know this poem ?

THE LAMB.

Little lamb, who made thee ?
Dost thou know who made thee ?
Gave thee life, and bade thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice ?
Little lamb, who made thee ?
Dost thou know who made thee ?
Little lamb, I'll tell thee.
Little lamb, I'll tell thee.
He is called by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.

He is meek, and He is mild.
He became a little Child.
I a child, and thou a Lamb.
We are callèd by His name.
Little lamb, God bless thee.
Little lamb, God bless thee.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Other thoughts which may come to you are that Abel who was innocent was put to death by his wicked brother Cain, and our dear Lord, holiness and innocence itself, was put to death by His wicked brethren, the Jews.

We next speak to God of the sacrifice offered to Him by Abraham. You remember God tried Abraham to see whether he trusted entirely.

God said to him: " Abraham, Abraham."

And he answered: " Here I am."

He said to him: " Take thy only-begotten son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and go into the land of vision. And there thou shalt offer him for a holocaust upon one of the mountains which I will show thee."

So Abraham, rising up in the night, saddled his ass, and took with him two young men, and Isaac his son. And when he had cut wood for the holocaust he went his way to the place where God had commanded him.

And on the third day, lifting up his eyes, he saw the place afar off.

And he said to the young men: " Stay you here with the ass. I and the boy will go with

speed as far as yonder, and after we have worshipped, we will return to you."

And he took the wood for the holocaust, and laid it upon Isaac, his son, and he himself carried in his hands fire and a sword. And as the two went on together, Isaac said to his father: "My father."

And he answered: "What wilt thou, son?"

"Behold," said he, "fire and wood. Where is the victim for the holocaust?"

And Abraham said: "God will provide Himself a victim for a holocaust, my son."

So they went on together. And they came to the place where God had shown him, where he built an altar, and laid the wood in order upon it. And when he had bound Isaac, his son, he laid him upon the altar upon the pile of wood.

And he put forth his hand and took the sword, to sacrifice his son. And behold an Angel of the Lord from heaven called to him, saying: "Abraham, Abraham."

And he answered: "Here I am."

And he said to him: "Lay not thy hand upon the boy, neither do thou anything to him. Now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not spared thy only-begotten son for my sake."

Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw behind his back a ram amongst the briars sticking fast by the horns, which he took and offered for an holocaust instead of his son (Gen. xxii. 1-13).

How many of you know the beautiful book which is in front of me as I write ? It is called " Old Testament Stories," and is written by Father Martindale, S.J. The first story is about Abraham, and the book has the most lovely pictures. You would, I know, like it.

Abraham offering his only son reminds you of God the Father: " God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son " (St. John iii. 16).

You will see plenty of other likenesses, too.

They went up a mountain. Some people have thought it was really Mount Calvary.

Isaac carried the wood, and Jesus carried His Cross.

Isaac allowed himself to be bound, though being young he was stronger than his old father. Jesus allowed Himself to be nailed to the Cross though He was infinitely more powerful than His executioners. Then remind yourself still once more that Holy Mass is one and the same Sacrifice as that on Calvary.

Lastly, there is the story of Melchisedech, that mysterious priest and King, who met Abraham after a great victory and blessed him.

And Melchisedech, the King of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was a priest of the most high God, blessed him and said: " Blessed be Abraham by the most high God, who created heaven and earth. And blessed be the most high God by whose protection the enemies are in thy hands." And he gave him the tithes of all (Gen. xiv. 18-20).

Of our Blessed Lord it is said in the Bible that He is a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech.

He is a priest offering bread and wine, which on the altar have just been changed into His adorable Body and Blood.

In the letter or Epistle to the Hebrews, the writer in chapter vii. has some very interesting things about this, which you may look up for yourself.

CHAPTER XXIV

A LADDER REACHING TO HEAVEN

Supplices te rogamus, omnipotens Deus, jube hæc perferri per manus sancti angeli tui in sublime altare tuum, in conspectu divinæ Majestatis tuæ, ut quotquot ex hac altaris participatione, sacrosanctum Filii tui corpus ✠ et ✠ sanguinem sumpserimus, omni benedictione cœlesti et gratia repleamur. Per eumdem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

We most humbly beseech Thee, almighty God, command these things to be carried by the hands of Thy holy angel to Thy altar on high, in the sight of Thy divine Majesty, that as many of us, as by participation at this altar, shall receive the most sacred Body ✠ and ✠ Blood of Thy Son, may be filled with all heavenly benediction and grace. Through the same Christ, etc. Amen.

WHEN the priest is speaking in the person of our divine Lord, or as a minister of His holy Church, he holds himself erect, but now, when he is representing sinful man, he bends low in humility. He lays his joined hands upon the altar as if to claim the help of Jesus lying there, and when he mentions the altar he kisses it.

What does the prayer mean? It is one difficult to understand, about which writers have held different opinions. Pope Innocent III. goes so far as to say that "The human mind can hardly penetrate its sense." But if we take it a few words at a time we may be able to find out something which will help us.

What are "these things" of which we speak? They are, first, the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord now present upon the altar, and then there is what we have added as our own offering, ourselves soul and body, all our desire to serve God better, our reasonable service. These little gifts, joined to the great offering of the Mass, we ask God to command to be carried to His altar on high—that is, in heaven.

St. John, the beloved disciple, speaks of this wonderful altar in his vision, told us in the last book of the New Testament, the Apocalypse. One verse reminds us very forcibly of this prayer:

"And another Angel came and stood before the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given to him much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all the Saints upon the golden altar which is before the throne of God."

We ask that these things may be carried to that altar by "the hands of Thy holy Angel," and these are the words most difficult to explain. Very many meanings have been put forward. I will tell you some of them, and since learned men differ, you may surely choose the one which pleases you best: What Angel is meant? Is it the Guardian Angel of the priest? One of the Angels about the altar during Mass and guardian of the Blessed Sacrament? The Guardian Angel of the Church? The Angel mentioned by St. John in the verse I have just quoted? Can it mean our Lord Himself, one of whose titles

used in a Christmas Mass is the "Angel of Great Counsel"?

The word "angel" means a messenger, one sent; and our Lord, when praying for unity among His people, said:

"That they may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast SENT Me."

The prayer makes us think of a new Jacob's ladder, reaching from the altar here to the altar in heaven. At the bottom step, Jesus offering Himself under the appearances of bread and wine. At the top, Jesus showing to His Father for us His sacred Wounds.

There is a book called "Mysteries of the Mass in Reasoned Prayers." To make us read slowly and really think about what we read, only a few words are printed on each line. I wonder if you would like it? I should like this book to make you want to read others about Holy Mass. This is what the priest who wrote it says about the prayer of which we are talking:

SUPPLICES TE ROGAMUS.

PRAY TO HAVE YOUR HEART IN HEAVEN.

Upon Thy altar, O Lord God,
we have heaped up our gifts,
the things we cherish most—
our minds, our hearts, ourselves.
Grant, we beseech Thee, that
Thy Angel, our Mediator and Good Shepherd,

Jesus, Thy Son,
may take these offerings to Himself,
and, upon His shoulders,
carry them to the altar on high
in the sight of Thy Divine Majesty,
There let them remain,
that we who partake of His Body and Blood
may ever be loyal citizens of Heaven
though in exile here;
ever obedient to its laws,
ever true to its standards,
ever sensible of its sweet attraction,
and more conscious always that we belong
more truly to Heaven than to the Earth.
May a hunger and a home-longing lead us
safely through all the mazes of this world
into our Father's house at last,
where with Jesus and His Saints
we may be at home and rejoice
with Thee for ever. Amen.

The last part of the prayer reminds us that the perfect way of joining in our Lord's sacrifice at Holy Mass is to receive Him during it in Holy Communion, sacramentally if we can, but at least spiritually. For all who do so the Church begs that they may be filled with every grace and blessing.

There is another reminder there, too—that is, not to be selfish in our prayers, not to think only of our own wants, but to pray often and earnestly for others.

Dominican Rite.

The Dominican priest bends low during the first part of this prayer, but he crosses his hands over his breast.

CHAPTER XXV

FOR THOSE WHO SLEEP

THE next prayer in your Ordinary of the Mass is the memory of the dead.

You remember that before the Consecration there was a special remembrance, or memento of the living, and many writers have thought that in ancient times the priest at Mass prayed for the dead immediately afterwards.

In any case the memory of them where it now is seems very fitting. We who are alive are able to join with the priest in offering up the Holy Mass for ourselves, but the dead can only have part through benefiting by the fruits of the Mass, and so the Church waits until Jesus lies upon the altar to offer Him to God on behalf of the suffering souls in Purgatory.

In early days, at the place where in your Missal you see the letters *N.* and *N.*, there used to be read out the list of the dead to be prayed for. The names were written on the ivory tablets called diptychs. This was done as late as the sixteenth century in some places, but you can easily see that this might make the Mass very long. Everyone would want to have his own name and the names of those dear to him read out after death during the Holy Sacrifice.

Now in most churches at Mass on Sunday a very short list is read with the notices, men-

tioning those who have died during the week, or whose anniversaries occur at the time. In some places on All Souls' Day, November 2, a yearly list of the dead is read out at the solemn Requiem Mass. The priest now makes no stop in the Mass at the place where the letters *N.* and *N.* are placed. He goes on until he has said the words "sleep of peace." Then he pauses, joins his hands and, looking at the sacred Host, he prays silently for those he wishes specially to remember, and you should do the same.

The actual words of this prayer are:

COMMEMORATION OF THE DEAD.

Memento etiam, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum, *N.* et *N.*, qui nos præcesserunt cum signo fidei, et dormiunt in somno pacis.	Be mindful, O Lord, of Thy servants and handmaids, *N.* and *N.*, who are gone before us with the sign of faith, and sleep in the sleep of peace.

Here particular mention is silently made of such of the Dead as are to be prayed for.

Ipsis, Domine, et omnibus in Christo quiescentibus locum refrigerii, lucis et pacis, ut indulgeas, deprecamur. Per eumdem Christum, etc. Amen.	To these, O Lord, and to all that rest in Christ, grant, we beseech Thee, a place of refreshment, light and peace. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

It is very tenderly and beautifully worded, and if you have read the other little book I wrote for you about the Mass, "Master, where dwellest Thou?" I think it will remind you

of the Catacombs and the inscriptions found on the tombs there.

It is not a difficult prayer to understand.

" The sign of faith " means baptism.

Death is spoken of as sleep. Our Lord Himself, when speaking of the little daughter of Jairus, said she was sleeping. All the early Christians spoke of it in this way, and even to our own day we have kept the thought in the word " cemetery," which means a sleeping place, and is so much nicer than the word " graveyard." Another beautiful old way of speaking of the place where the dead lie was to call it God's acre. We have often alluded to the Church as our Mother, and not without cause. Mothers don't forget their children. There is not only a petition for special persons, but the prayer goes on to include " all that rest in Christ." Not a Mass is said in which every poor soul, however forgotten by others, is not thought of and prayed for by our Holy Mother, the Church.

On this subject St. Augustine says: " That such religious duty, when it becomes neglected by parents, children, relations and friends, is supplied by our loving and common Mother, the Church." But the duty should not be neglected by us. We, too, should pray for all the Holy Souls. I heard lately of a great English lady who left instructions in her will that at every prayer said for her there was to be mention made of all the faithful departed.

The Church asks three things for the dead: Refreshment, light, and peace. These three

great blessings recall some beautiful texts from your New Testament.

Our Lord says: "Come to Me all you that labour and are burdened, and I will *refresh* you" (St. Matt. xi. 28).

Of heaven St. John says: "And the city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon to shine in it. For the glory of God hath enlightened it and the Lamb is the *light* thereof" (Apoc. xxi. 23).

In His talk with His Apostles on the night of Holy Thursday, Jesus said to them: "*Peace* I leave with you, My *peace* I give unto you." And His greeting on Easter Day was: "*Peace* be to you."

Dominican Rite.

In a Dominican Mass the dead are prayed for at the place where the letters *N.* and *N.* actually stand.

CHAPTER XXVI

IN GREAT COMPANY

THE next prayer is one of great interest. The priest, who has not spoken aloud since he began the Canon, now breaks the solemn silence, and raises his voice to say the words: "Nobis quoque peccatoribus" (And to us sinners).

At the same time, like the publican in the Gospel, he strikes his breast with his right hand; his left is resting on the corporal.

We have already prayed for the Church and its living members generally, and for the dead. Now the priest prays especially for himself and for those assisting at his Mass. The prayer makes a beautiful Act of Hope. Knowing what we are, we throw ourselves on the mercy of God and ask for no less a thing than to be numbered among the Saints.

We have here another list. Look at it carefully, and compare it with the one you had before the Consecration. It is quite different; there is a general allusion to the former list, "Thy holy Apostles and Martyrs," but no name is repeated, not even our Blessed Lady's. Some curious omissions are made good. St. John the Baptist, left out of the first list; St. Stephen, the first martyr; St. Matthias, the Apostle chosen in the place of Judas; St. Barnabas, the companion of St. Paul.

So far there has been no mention of women among the martyrs, and yet they have proved themselves as brave as men in dying for our Lord. There is a tradition that Pope Gregory I. noticed this omission, and remedied it by placing here the names of seven well-known heroines of the faith.

In choosing these Saints there seems to have been a design to take examples from every class of person:

St. John the Baptist was a Prophet.
St. Stephen, a Deacon.
St. Matthias, an Apostle.
St. Ignatius, a Bishop.
St. Alexander, a Pope.
St. Marcellinus, a priest.
SS. Felicitas and Perpetua were wives.
SS. Agatha, Lucy, Agnes and Cecillia were virgins.
St. Anastasia was a widow.

The whole prayer runs thus:

Nobis quoque peccatoribus famulis tuis, de multitudine miserationum tuarum sperantibus, partem aliquam et societatem donare digneris, cum tuis sanctis apostolis et martyribus: cum Joanne, Stephano, Matthia, Barnaba, Ignatio, Alexandro, Marcellino, Petro, Felicitate, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucia, Agnete, Cæcilia, Anasta-

And to us sinners, Thy servants, hoping in the multitude of Thy mercies, vouchsafe to grant some part and fellowship with Thy holy Apostles and Martyrs; with John, Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas, Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicitas, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecily, Anastasia, and with all

sia, et omnibus sanctis tuis: intra quorum nos consortium, non æstimator meriti, sed veniæ, quæsumus, largitor admitte. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

Per quem hæc omnia, Domine, semper bona creas, sancti✠ficas, vivi✠ficas, bene ✠dicis, et præstas nobis. Per ip✠sum, et cum ip✠so, et in ip✠so, est tibi Deo Patri ✠omnipotenti, in unitate Spiritus Sancti, omnis honor et gloria.

V. Per omnia sæcula sæculorum.

R. Amen.

thy Saints: into whose company we beseech Thee to admit us, not considering our merit, but freely pardoning our offences. Through Christ our Lord.

By whom, O Lord, Thou dost always create, ✠ sanctify, ✠ quicken, ✠ bless, and give us all these good things. Through Him ✠ and with Him, ✠ and in Him, ✠ is to Thee, God the Father ✠ Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory.

V. For ever and ever.

R. Amen.

You notice the three crosses at the words "sanctify, quicken, and bless." In ancient times it is probable that "these good things" spoken of were the fruits of the earth which were blessed. We know that at Easter and Pentecost a drink of water, milk, and honey was blessed for the newly baptised at this point of the Mass. On Ascension Day, beans were blessed; on the Feast of St. Agnes, a lamb; on the Feast of St. Sixtus, grapes; and to this day the Holy Oils are blessed here by the Bishop on Maundy Thursday.

Then comes the magnificent ending to the Canon, with more mysterious Signs of the Cross. The priest genuflects, uncovers the chalice,

takes the Host in his right hand and holds the chalice with his left. With the Host he makes three times the Sign of the Cross over the chalice, then twice more outside the chalice when he mentions the Father and the Holy Ghost. These signs are not meant as blessings. If you like, they can remind you once more that the Mass is the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross where our Lord shed His Precious Blood for us through His five sacred Wounds.

When the priest says the words, "omnis honor et gloria," there is a ceremony which will interest you greatly. He raises the chalice with the Host held over it a few inches from the altar, and then, putting it down, genuflects. This is called now "the Little Elevation," but for hundreds of years it was the only Elevation of the Mass. It was not until the twelfth century that we began to have the Elevation we know so well. This was almost certainly begun as an Act of Faith against those who wrongly taught that our Lord was not really present in the Host as soon as the priest had said over it the words of Consecration. So the custom began of immediately raising it for us to adore. It was not till some time later that the chalice began to be raised, too, after its consecration, and it is not raised even now by the Carthusians.

The priest ends by saying aloud or singing: "Per omnia sæcula sæculorum." To which the server or the choir replies, "Amen." (For ever and ever. Amen.)

This last part of the Canon always reminds me of the scene in heaven of which St. John tells us:

"The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power and divinity, and wisdom and strength, and honour and glory, and benediction. And every creature which is in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard all saying: To Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, benediction and honour, and glory and power, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen."

DOMINICAN RITE.

Rather curiously Dominicans have not the Little and Older Elevation at their Mass.

CHAPTER XXVII

OUR FATHER

THE priest has closed the Canon with the words, " Per omnia sæcula sæculorum," and has received the answer, " Amen."

Perhaps you would like to know that on Easter Sunday when the Pope says Mass no Amen is said. This is in memory of Pope Gregory the Great, who, according to a pretty legend, was answered on Easter Sunday by the Angels.

The Canon was introduced by the Preface; the third part of the Mass, which contains the act of Communion, is introduced by the " Our Father."

Your catechism says: " The best of all prayers is the ' Our Father '." Surely the best of all times to say this best of all prayers is during Holy Mass.

It is called the Lord's Prayer because our Lord made it and gave it to us in answer to the petition of His Apostles: " Lord, teach us to pray." Tradition says that it was placed in the Mass by the Apostles at the command of our Lord Himself.

The Church has always tried to make us understand how holy this prayer is, and with what reverence we should say it. Now at Mass, before beginning it, the priest reminds Almighty God that if we dare to take this

great liberty, it is because our Lord invited and even commanded us to do so.

Oremus.

Præceptis salutaribus moniti, et divina institutione formati, audemus dicere:

Pater noster, qui es in cœlis, sanctificetur nomen tuum: adveniat regnum tuum; fiat voluntas tua sicut in cœlo, et in terra. Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie; et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

M. Sed libera nos a malo.

S. Amen.

Let us pray.

Instructed by Thy saving precepts, and following Thy divine institution, we presume to say: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name: Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

P. Amen.

In the very early days of Christianity, the times of persecution, it was forbidden to say the "Our Father" before outsiders. Even those under instruction, but not yet baptised, were not allowed to be present at the part of the Mass where the "Our Father" is said. You remember they went out after the Creed.

This keeping silent about the holy mysteries of our religion before unbelievers was called "the discipline of the secret." You may come across that phrase in books. We still have a trace of this discipline in the Divine Office. If you ever go to Vespers or Compline

you will notice the " Our Father " is always said secretly.

The more you think about the Lord's Prayer, the more wonderful you will see it to be. Saints have written books about it. One is called " St. Teresa's *Pater noster*." You know that " Pater Noster " means Our Father, do you not ?

It teaches us how to pray—it speaks first of God and His glory, and then of our needs. St. Augustine says: " Its seven petitions contain all we can or ought to ask for."

I said this the other day to a young officer who cannot get suitable work now the war is over, and he answered: " It does not ask for a job for me."

Of course, when he thought it over he saw that it did. When he said, " Give us this day our daily bread," he wanted God to give him work which would earn enough to supply his wants. And when he ended, " Deliver us from evil," I expect he meant just then the evil or misfortune of having no situation.

So when you want something from God, see which petition of the " Our Father " it comes under, and next time you hear Mass pray there for your special intention.

Then the " Our Father " is meant by the Church to be one of the prayers of immediate preparation for Holy Communion. If you are going to receive our Lord, how better can you prepare than by saying the very prayer He Himself taught you.

The priest joins his hands as he says the word, "Oremus," then he extends them, and during the whole of the *Pater noster* he keeps his eyes on the sacred Host.

The priest says the whole prayer in our days, the server or choir only answering with the last petition: "But deliver us from evil." Once the people sang or said it with the priest or in some places one petition at a time after him. In Spain they answered "Amen" after each petition.

Miss Hickey has given me permission to put into this book for you her beautiful poem on the "Our Father" called

THE PRAYER OF PRAYERS.

Our Father, our Father; not theirs and mine,
But ours we call Thee in prayer divine;
Ours, Thy created, adopted given
Freely to enter the Kingdom of Heaven;
Ours, Thy own children, Thy Church's race;
Ours, Thou hast gifted with sevenfold grace.
We love one another, Lord God, we say,
As we call Thee our Father day by day.
But some of Thy children are wandering far
From the fold where the sheep of Thy pasture are.
Father, do Thou in Thy love untold
One day bring them into the fold.
Maker and Lover, Thee we call
Father of Jesus, Father of all.

In heaven Thou art, Our Father; there
Thou hearest our feeble praise and prayer;
Where the perfect light is never dim,
Where the angels sing the Sanctus hymn;
Where the might of Thy glory shines full shown,
As Thou sittest on Thy Great White Throne;

Where Jesus is, who died to free
Our souls from death eternally;
Where Blessed Mary bows to plead
For her children in their hour of need;
Where the dear saints praise Thy name, and pray
For us who seek their prayers alway;
God, who art everywhere, who art
The Source of heaven, its glory's heart,
In the selfsame words by Jesus given,
We call Thee Our Father who art in heaven.

Thy name is Justice, Thy name is Might;
Thy name is Glory, Thy name is Light
Low to Thee bending, our hearts proclaim
Holy, thrice holy is Thy name
That name be hallowed all names above,
Our Father in heaven, whose name is Love.

Thy kingdom come, O mightiest King,—
That kingdom which our bliss will bring;
The end of sorrow and distress;
The rule of perfect righteousness;
All sin, all pain, forever fled,
And death itself forever dead.
In gentleness, in purity,
In all the love that is of Thee.
Help us to live, O Jesus dear,
And bring Our Father's kingdom near!

Lord, as the Holiest gave up His will,
Let us surrender ours to Thee still;
Teach us to say it, hard though it be
This our oblation, self to Thee.
So shall the glory of victory won.
Crown us in saying, "Thy will be done."

Lord, Thou knowest our every need,
Yet hast Thou told us thus to plead;
Not for to-morrow the prayer be said,
Give us this day our daily bread,

OUR FATHER

Bread for the body, bread for the mind,
Bread for the spirit, let us find;
And the Bread of Life to our altars sent.
When Jesus comes in His Sacrament.

Forgive us, Father, the debts we owe,
Whose sum of terror we cannot know.
Even as we cancel our debtor's due,
Father, in mercy, cancel ours too.

Father, who triest our faith, our love,
Suffer us not to be tried above
What we can bear; for weak are we,
But, Lord, from the evil set us free
Oh, from the evil, Lord, forever,
Do Thou Thy little ones deliver!

Thus we pray in the prayer of prayers
He taught, who carried our griefs and cares.

EMILY HICKEY.

CHAPTER XXVIII

A NEW WORD

IMMEDIATELY following the Amen at the end of the *Pater noster* you have another prayer. In books you will always find it called an "Embolism," which I think will be a new word to you. It means addition; this prayer is added on to the Lord's Prayer, and continues the last petition.

Libera nos, quæsumus Domine, ab omnibus malis, præteritis, præsentibus, et futuris: et intercedente beata, et gloriosa semper Virgine Dei Genitrice Maria, cum beatis Apostolis tuis Petro et Paulo, atque Andrea, et omnibus Sanctis, da propitius pacem in diebus nostris: ut ope misericordiæ tuae adjuti, et a peccato simus semper liberi, et ab omni perturbatione securi. Per eumdem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum. Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus sancti Deus.

P. Per omnia sæcula sæculorum.

R. Amen.

Deliver us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, from all evils, past, present, and to come: and by the intercession of the blessed and glorious Mary ever Virgin, Mother of God, together with Thy blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and Andrew, and all the Saints, mercifully grant peace in our days: that by the assistance of Thy mercy we may be always free from sin, and secure from all disturbance. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Who with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth God.

P. World without end.

R. Amen.

Since in it the Church so specially asks for "peace in our days" it may have been added

during one of the great persecutions. It is certainly very ancient.

We ask to be delivered from evils past, present, and to come.

Past evils are our sins.

Present evils: our temptations and weakness.

Future evils: sin, the results of sin, and particularly its eternal punishment.

In this prayer there is another short list of Saints: Our Lady, St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Andrew. Jesus our Victim is now lying on the altar offering Himself once more for us, and you notice how closely those named are associated with the Cross:

Our Lady stood at the foot of the Cross.

St. Peter and St. Andrew were both crucified.

St. Paul had the Stigmata—that means that on his body he had marks of our Lord's Five Wounds. Our blessed Lord has granted this favour to some of His Saints.

In the Middle Ages the priest was expressly allowed to add after St. Andrew the name of any Saint he liked.

During this short prayer the priest performs a number of ceremonies:

At the beginning of it, he takes the paten from under the corporal. At the word "peace" he signs himself with it, and then kisses it as a token of love. Then he slips it under the Host and genuflects.

DOMINICAN RITE.

The paten is put aside on the altar off the corporal and not under the sacred Host.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

THE priest, having genuflected, takes into his hand the sacred Host, and holding it over the chalice, he breaks it into two equal parts, saying: "Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord."

The part in his right hand he now puts on the paten again. He is still holding the other piece over the chalice. From it he breaks a tiny particle, and puts the larger portion down with the other already on the paten. While doing this he says: "Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost."

Holding the small piece over the chalice, he says aloud: "Per omnia sæcula sæculorum," and receives the answer: "Amen."

The priest continues: "The peace of the Lord be always with you."

To this the server answers: "And with thy spirit."

At the same time the priest makes three crosses over the chalice with the particle in his hand, and drops it into the Precious Blood with the following prayer:

Hæc commixtio, et consecratio Corporis et Sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi, fiat accipientibus nobis in vitam æternam. Amen.	May this mingling and consecration of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ be to us that receive it effectual to eternal life. Amen.

There are so many interesting things to say about this ceremony. I can only tell you a few in the hope that you will then want to read more about it from a larger book.

When a Bishop ordains a priest, he calls special attention to this ceremony, telling him to study carefully the entire rite of the Mass, but in particular the Consecration, the Fraction (that is, breaking), and the Communion.

If you turn to the accounts given in your New Testament of the Institution of the Holy Eucharist, you will see that at the Last Supper Jesus took bread, blessed and " broke " it. That is a sufficient reason for doing it now in Holy Mass. This act made such an impression upon the early Christians that one of their names for Mass was " the breaking of bread." Do you remember the disciples at Emmaus on the first Easter day who had invited our Lord to stay with them without recognising Him ? We are told " they knew Him in the breaking of bread."

Why the Host is divided into three parts is not quite clear. In different parts of the world there have been different customs. In some places it was broken into four parts, in others into nine.

At Rome, in early times, the three portions were destined for different purposes. One was put into the chalice; one was used for the Communion of the celebrant, his deacon and subdeacon; the third was for the Communion of the faithful, the sick, and to be sent to the

surrounding churches. We have still a trace of the old custom. When the Pope sings Mass, he puts one of the three parts into the chalice, consumes one himself, and the third portion he divides again into two parts, giving one to his deacon and the other to his subdeacon.

When a Bishop is being consecrated, the Bishop performing the ceremony uses one of the three parts to give to the Bishop he is consecrating.

Again, if a priest has not consecrated particles for a communicant he is allowed to give him a portion of the sacred Host of the Mass.

In very ancient times a tiny portion of the Blessed Sacrament, which had been reserved for the sick, was brought to the next Mass and dropped into the chalice before the Fraction. This was meant to bring home to men's minds in a very striking manner the oneness of the Holy Sacrifice from one Mass to another.

So, too, the Pope or Bishop sent a fragment of the Host he had consecrated to the priests of the surrounding churches. They received It and put It in their chalice when they said Mass as a sign of the union between themselves and the Pope or Bishop.

Both these customs have now disappeared.

Of course, it is not the Body of our Lord which is broken, but only the appearance of bread. This is put clearly for us in the *Lauda Sion*, the Sequence in the Mass for Corpus Christi:

"When the Sacrament is broken,
Doubt not, but believe 'tis spoken,
That each severed outward token
Doth the very whole contain:
Nought the Precious Gift divideth,
Breaking but the sign betideth,
Jesus still the same abideth,
Still unbroken doth remain."

Some writers think the three crosses made over the chalice are in memory of the three days that our Lord was in the tomb. St. Thomas Aquinas says that the dropping of the particle of the Host into the chalice signifies the union of His Soul and Body on the day of His Resurrection.

Father Roche, in his reasoned prayers on the Mass, puts this idea before you:

Help me, dear Jesus, to understand
the mystery of Thy Body and Blood,
seeming to our senses
separate and apart on the altar,
divided as they were in death,
but now again united in the chalice,
and inseparably one
as in Thy risen life.

* * * * *

Beneath these rites and symbols
I behold, dear Jesus, Thy Resurrection,
the end and final act of Thy bitter Passion,
which with Thy birth and death
make one whole and complete work
whereby we all are saved.
Without the Passion, Thou wouldst not redeem us,
without the Resurrection Thy Passion were in vain.
I contemplate with joy
Thy victory over death.

I give Thee heartfelt thanks
that Thou didst leave the tomb,
the birthplace of Thy glory,
and show Thyself openly on earth
to many of good will.
Make my will good and show Thyself to me.
Rise in my heart and warm it with Thy love.
Rise in my mind and light it with Thy truth.
Be Thou Thyself my Sun.

DOMINICAN RITE.

The ceremonies for the Fraction are somewhat different in a Dominican Mass. The priest breaks the Host at the same point in the Mass, but he does not put any of it back on the paten. He places one large portion behind the other crosswise in his left hand, and holding them over the chalice, he breaks from the crosswise piece a tiny particle. Holding this particle in his right hand he makes the three crosses over the chalice, and then putting it close to the piece from which it was broken, as if joined again, he says the *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God), followed by a rather longer form of the prayer, " May this mingling," and not containing the rather puzzling word " consecration," and then drops the particle into the chalice.

CHAPTER XXX

THE LAMB OF GOD

HAVING dropped into the chalice the particle of the Host, the priest covers the chalice, genuflects, and then bowing down, says the *Agnus Dei*, striking his breast three times:

THE AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.	Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

The priest until now has addressed himself almost exclusively to the First Person of the Blessed Trinity, but now, when the time of his Communion is drawing so near he speaks directly to our Blessed Lord, calling Him by His title, Lamb of God, which is a very favourite name for Him.

In the Old Testament the paschal lamb was one of the most striking types of our Lord. If you do not remember the story well, you will find it in your Bible in the twelfth chapter of the book of Exodus.

The name was actually given to our Lord by St. John the Baptist. He saw Jesus coming towards him, and pointed Him out to the crowd, saying: " Behold, the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world." The next day St. John happened to be standing with two of his own followers when he saw our Lord walking along. He said to them: " Behold the Lamb of God."

In the last book of the Bible, the Apocalypse, the other St. John, the disciple specially loved by Jesus, uses this name about thirty times. I have quoted one passage for you already in an earlier chapter. Another passage comes naturally to our mind here when Jesus Christ is lying on the altar as our victim. St. John says: " I saw a Lamb standing as it were slain."

In the Preface for Easter Sunday the Church sings: " He is the true Lamb who has taken away the sin of the world."

In Masses for the Dead, the priest, instead of saying, " Have mercy on us," says twice, " Give them rest," and the third time, " Give them eternal rest." He does not strike his breast. At first the petition in the Mass was each time the same, " Have mercy on us," and this is still so in the church of St. John Lateran at Rome, but elsewhere for many hundred years the form, " Grant us peace," has been used for the third. The change is said to have been made in the thirteenth century during a time of great trial for the Church.

The *Agnus Dei* is a beautiful prayer to say

when we have sinned; we could use it when we are going to Confession, and the Church has placed it in the Mass as a preparation for Holy Communion.

Do you know these lines, by Christina Rossetti?

"A lamb is innocent and mild,
And merry on the soft green sod:
And Jesus Christ, the Undefiled,
Is the Lamb of God.
Only spotless He
Upon His Mother's knee;
White and ruddy soon to be,
Sacrificed for you and me."

Or Father Tabb's little poem, called "The Lamb-Child"?

"When Christ the Babe was born,
Full many a little lamb
Upon the wintry hills forlorn
Was nestled near its dam.
And waking or asleep,
Upon His Mother's breast,
For love of her, each mother-sheep
And baby-lamb He blessed."

DOMINICAN RITE.

As a Dominican during this prayer has the Host in both hands he does not strike his breast while saying it.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE KISS OF PEACE

THE priest bows a little and rests his hands upon the altar to say the prayers which follow the *Agnus Dei*.

At High Mass there is a very ancient and interesting ceremony here called the Giving of the Pax, or the Kiss of Peace.

The priest says the first prayer of preparation for his Communion:

Domine Jesu Christe, qui dixisti Apostolis tuis: Pacem relinquo vobis, pacem meam do vobis: ne respicias peccata mea, sed fidem Ecclesiæ tuæ: eamque secundum voluntatem tuam pacificare et coadunare digneris: qui vivis et regnas Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	Lord Jesus Christ, who saidst to Thy Apostles, peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; regard not my sins, but the faith of Thy Church; and vouchsafe to it that peace and unity which is agreeable to Thy will: who livest and reignest God for ever and ever. Amen.

Then he kisses the altar, turns to the deacon, puts his hands on his shoulders, and leans towards him as if to embrace him, saying: " Pax tecum " (Peace be with thee).

The deacon answers: " Et cum spiritu tuo " (And with thy spirit).

This same ceremony is then done by the other ministers of the altar and the clergy present.

THE KISS OF PEACE

In the earliest times the Kiss of Peace went through the entire congregation, and was intended as a ceremony of reconciliation before Holy Communion. There are some words of our Lord Himself which will at once come into your mind:

"If, therefore, thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then coming thou shalt offer thy gift" (St. Matt. v. 23, 24).

If you are "out of friends" with anyone, this is the moment to forgive with your whole heart, and to decide what would be the most generous way in which you could possibly make it up. The Kiss of Peace is not given in Masses for the Dead, nor on the last three days of Holy Week.

Dominican Rite.

At one time the priest kissed the sacred Host before giving the Pax, and to this day a Dominican priest, after saying the *Agnus Dei*, kisses the edge of his chalice, and then at High Mass the Pax which is offered to him by the deacon.

The Pax is a small instrument of gold or silver, having on it a representation of Jesus crucified.

When the Dominican priest kisses it he says:

"Peace to thee and to the Holy Church of God." In some places he added in days gone by: "That you may be in a becoming state to approach the Holy Mysteries."

After being kissed by the priest, the Pax is offered to the ministers at the altar, to the clergy, and to any lay brothers who may be in the choir.

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CHAPTER XXXII

THE PRIEST'S COMMUNION

Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi, qui ex voluntate Patris, cooperante Spiritu sancto, per mortem tuam mundum vivificasti: libera me per hoc sacrosanctum Corpus et Sanguinem tuum ab omnibus iniquitatibus meis, et universis malis: et fac me tuis semper inhærere mandatis, et a te numquam separari permittas: qui cum eodem Deo Patre, et Spiritu sancto vivis et regnas Deus in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who, according to the will of the Father, through the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, hast by Thy death given life to the world; deliver me by this Thy most sacred Body and Blood from all mine iniquities and from all evils, and make me always adhere to Thy commandments, and never suffer me to be separated from Thee; who with the same God the Father and Holy Ghost livest and reignest God for ever and ever. Amen.

Perceptio Corporis tui, Domine Jesu Christe, quod ego indignus sumere præsumo, non mihi proveniat in judicium et condemnationen: sed pro tua pietate prosit mihi ad tutamentum mentis et corporis, et ad medelam percipiendam: qui vivis et regnas cum Deo Patre in unitate Spiritus sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Let not the participation of Thy Body, O Lord Jesus Christ, which I, unworthy, presume to receive, turn to my judgment and condemnation; but through Thy goodness may it be to me a safeguard and remedy, both of soul and body. Who with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest God for ever and ever. Amen.

THESE two prayers now form the priest's personal preparation for Holy Communion. You will notice that they are in the first person singular. The priest is no longer at this moment thinking of us, but of his own reception of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

These prayers were long nothing more than private devotions, like the prayers of people who go to Holy Communion now. They at first found no place in the Missal; they were finally fixed by Pope Pius V. in 1570, but may be found in some Missals earlier than that.

The priest says them with his hands joined on the altar and his eyes fixed on the sacred Host.

If you read them carefully you will notice that they are of great beauty and tenderness. It seems a pity that they are not used more often in preference to so many other forms, some of which find an echo in our hearts with such difficulty. These, on the contrary, like all the liturgy of the Church, express just what we need to say in the most sane and moderate terms. Notice that in the first of these two prayers the priest uses the words of St. Peter's act of faith: "Son of the living God." In the second prayer he asks our Lord that His Body may "be to me a safeguard and protection, both of body and soul." Commenting upon this prayer, Father Gavin, S.J., says:

"The six other Sacraments sanctify the body indirectly through the soul. The Holy Eu-

charist directly and immediately sanctifies our flesh. Hence the Blessed Sacrament is the best remedy against impurity, and the best guardian of chastity."

Having ended it, the priest genuflects, takes the Host in his left hand between the thumb and first finger, and, holding the paten between the second and third, he says: "I will take the Bread of Heaven and call upon the name of the Lord."

Then with his right hand he strikes his breast while saying three times in a slightly raised voice the words of the centurion:

Domine, non sum dignus, ut intres sub tectum meum; sed tantum dic verbo, et sanabitur anima mea. (*Ter.*)	Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed. (*Thrice.*)

He then takes both parts of the Host into his right hand, makes the Sign of the Cross with it upon himself, saying:

Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam meam in vitam æternam. Amen.	May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to life everlasting. Amen.

and so communicates himself.

For a moment he remains adoring our Lord, then he uncovers the chalice, genuflects, and gathers up on the paten any tiny fragments of the Host that may have fallen upon the corporal, and puts them into the chalice. I am told that the Greeks call these fragments

"precious pearls," which reminds me of a beautiful line of poetry written by a great poet:

"Pearl of great price within the monstrance set."

While doing this the priest says:

Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus, quæ retribuit mihi? Calicem salutaris accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo. Laudans invocabo Dominum, et ab inimicis meis salvus ero.	What shall I render to the Lord for all He hath rendered unto me? I will take the Chalice of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. I will call upon the Lord and praise Him, and I shall be saved from mine enemies.

He then takes the chalice in his right hand, holds the paten in his left, and making with the chalice the Sign of the Cross upon himself, receives the Precious Blood with the particles in it, saying:

Sanguis Domini nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam meam in vitam æternam. Amen.	The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to everlasting life. Amen.

The priest's Communion is the third of the principal parts of the Mass, and is necessary to complete the Holy Sacrifice. The law about this is very strict, and should a priest become ill after the Consecration and before the Communion, another priest must be got to consume the Blessed Sacrament, even if this priest should not be fasting.

DOMINICAN RITE.

There is now the last prayer, " Let not the participation," etc., and the ceremonies of a Dominican priest in giving himself Communion are different. He is still holding the Host which he took into his hand at the end of the prayer following the *Pater noster*. Having said the first of the prayers at the head of this chapter, without striking his breast or adding anything further, with his left hand he immediately receives the Host, saying: " May the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve me to life everlasting."

He then covers the chalice and remains a few moments thinking about our Lord. Afterwards, genuflecting, he takes the pall off, and holding the chalice with both hands, receives the Precious Blood without saying anything.

Putting his left hand on the altar, with his right he again raises and drains the chalice, and then only collects any particles that may be on the corporal as we have seen above.

CHAPTER XXXIII

OUR OWN HOLY COMMUNION

EACH time the priest says the *Domine non sum dignus* the server rings the bell to warn us that it is time to approach the altar if we are going to Holy Communion. We go quietly to the altar rail, kneel down, and take up the cloth or card provided. The server, in our name, says the *Confiteor*, the Church's official act of contrition, that we may for the last time purify our souls from the slightest stain before receiving the God of all holiness. We should join in these prayers.

The priest opens the tabernacle, genuflects, takes out the ciborium and places it on the corporal. He takes off the veil which covers it and the lid, genuflects again, and, turning towards the communicants, says: "May Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and bring you to life everlasting."

The server says "Amen" for us.

Then, making over us the Sign of the Cross, the priest continues: "May the Almighty and Merciful Lord give you pardon, absolution, and remission of your sins."

And again the server answers, "Amen."

The priest then turns back to the altar, genuflects a third time, takes the ciborium in his left hand, and, holding a Host over it with his right, he turns again towards us, and says:

" Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world."

And three times: " Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word and my soul shall be healed."

He comes to the rail and gives Communion, beginning at the Epistle end. We kneel up straight and still, close our eyes and open our mouths. Over each he makes the Sign of the Cross with the Host, and laying it on our tongue, says: " May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul to life everlasting. Amen."

Then the priest goes back to the altar, puts down the ciborium, genuflects, puts on the lid, and replaces it in the tabernacle, genuflecting again before he closes the door.

You would find it very interesting to trace the manner in which Holy Communion has been given to the laity.

In early times it was usually given under both kinds in one of three ways:

(1) The deacon put the chalice to the lips of each communicant.

(2) A gold or silver tube was used. In reading your " Imitation " you may have been puzzled by words alluding to this custom. " Wherefore, if I cannot draw out of the fulness of the fountain nor drink my fill, I will at least set my mouth to the orifice of this heavenly pipe, that so I may draw thence some small drop to refresh my thirst, to the end that I waste not wholly away."

(3) The Host was dipped into the chalice.

Once some heretics taught that wine was evil in itself, and to protest against their teaching the Church ordered Holy Communion to be given under both kinds.

Later on other heretics said that Christ was not received unless the communicant received both Host and chalice. To defeat this heresy the Church made a law in 1414 ordering Communion under one kind only, except for the priest celebrating Mass.

This is a question of what we call the Church's discipline. It can be changed at any time, and there are some parts of the world where Communion under both kinds is still allowed.

In some places there seems to have been a period of transition between the two customs. A few drops of consecrated wine were poured into a large quantity of unconsecrated, and given to the people.

Even now there is a rubric which says: " The minister shall present to those who have communicated a vessel containing wine and water, and a napkin to wipe the mouth." This was to assist in swallowing the Host. It is still done by Dominicans on Maundy Thursday, and for the laity there is a trace of it in the custom of giving the water in which the priest has washed his fingers to a sick person after Holy Communion.

In early times the sacred Host was not placed by the priest on the tongue, but on the hand.

The men received it on the bare hand; the women covered theirs with a linen cloth called a dominical.

DOMINICAN RITE.

In a Dominican church the server rings the bell after the *Agnus Dei.*

There is the special *Confiteor* and *Misereatur* of which we have spoken at the beginning of Mass.

When giving Holy Communion the priest says: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thee to life everlasting."

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE PRIEST'S THANKSGIVING

THE Church takes the greatest possible care that no part or particle of this precious Gift is lost, for under the smallest particle Jesus Christ is contained whole and entire. I have quoted for you already the lines of St. Thomas Aquinas from the *Lauda Sion:*

> "When the Sacrament is broken,
> Doubt not, but believe 'tis spoken,
> That each severed outward token
> Doth the very whole contain.
> Nought the precious Gift divideth,
> Breaking but the sign betideth,
> Jesus still the same abideth,
> Still unbroken doth remain."

Having then received the Precious Blood with the particles of the sacred Host, the priest holds out the chalice on the Epistle side, and the server pours in a little wine. This is called the first ablution. While taking it the priest says:

Quod ore sumpsimus, Domine, pura mente capiamus: et de munere temporali fiat nobis remedium sempiternum.	Grant, O Lord, that what we have taken with our mouth, we may receive with a pure mind; and of a temporal gift may it become to us an eternal remedy.

Then, holding the thumb and first finger of both hands above the chalice which he holds

firmly with the other fingers, the priest goes to the Epistle corner and has first wine and then water poured over his fingers, which he wipes on the purificator, saying:

Corpus tuum, Domine, quod sumpsi, et Sanguis, quem potavi, adhæreat visceribus meis: et præsta, ut in me non remaneat scelerum macula, quem pura et sancta refecerunt sacramenta: qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

May Thy Body, O Lord, which I have received, and Thy Blood which I have drunk, cleave to my heart, and grant that no stain of sin may remain in me, who have been refreshed with pure and holy Sacraments. Who livest, etc. Amen.

He receives this second ablution, wipes his lips and then the chalice with the purificator, which he spreads over the chalice. Above this he puts the paten, the pall, the silk veil, and the burse, into which he puts the corporal. He then goes to the Missal, finds in it the feast of the day, and reads a verse from the Psalms called the Communion.

Formerly it was a whole Psalm sung while the priest gave Holy Communion to the people. The thirty-third Psalm was one very often chosen. It lends itself easily to thoughts of Holy Communion. One verse says: "Taste and see, for the Lord is sweet."

When the priest had communicated all, the choir sang the *Gloria Patri* and repeated the Antiphon. We have nothing left of this custom but the Antiphon.

The priest goes to the middle of the altar,

kisses it, turns to the people and says: "Dominus vobiscum."

Having received from the server the answer, "Et cum spiritu tuo," he returns to the Missal and reads the prayer called the Post-Communion. This is his official thanksgiving. The Church makes it very short in order that he may have time to entertain our Lord according to his own devotion.

The Post-Communions correspond in number to the Collects and Secret prayers. Of these I read somewhere:

The Collect relates to the feast of the day.

The Secret to the Holy Sacrifice.

The Post-Communion to the Blessed Sacrament received.

This is the Post-Communion for Easter Sunday: "Pour forth upon us, O Lord, the spirit of Thy love, that those whom Thou hast nourished with the Paschal Sacrament may by Thy goodness live in perfect concord."

DOMINICAN RITE.

At the first ablution the priest goes to the Epistle side, holding the chalice in both hands, but saying nothing.

At the second ablution he says the prayer: "Grant, O Lord." He does not say the prayer, "May Thy Body," etc., at all. At Low Mass he does not put the corporal into the burse until he has quite finished Mass.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE PRIEST'S BLESSING

AFTER the Post-Communion the priest turns to the people and says: "Dominus vobiscum"; he receives the invariable answer: "Et cum spiritu tuo."

Then, still turned to the congregation, he says, "Ite missa est," to which the server replies: "Deo gratias." "Ite missa est" means It is the dismissal.

You must think it a little strange that the priest should solemnly dismiss you and then go on with the Mass. The explanation is that in other days this really did end the Holy Mass: there was nothing to follow. The prayer now in the Missal, the blessing, and the last Gospel, are all later additions. The Carthusians end their Mass here now; they have no prayer, no blessing, no Gospel of St. John. Sometimes the priest does not say this. For example, in Advent and Lent he says, "Benedicamus Domino" (Let us bless the Lord), the server answering, "Deo gratias." He does not dismiss the congregation, but invites them to praise God. In these early times some part of the Divine Office, the Sacrifice of Praise, was going to be said, and the people remained and took part.

In Masses for the Dead there is no dismissal either. The people present were expected to

remain for the absolutions and for the burial. The priest turns back to the altar, as he did for *Benedicamus Domino*, and says, "Requiescant in pace" (May they rest in peace), to which the server answers: "Amen."

After saying "Ite missa est," the priest turns back to the altar, and, bowing down before it, begs for a last time that God will accept the Holy Sacrifice for the ends for which he has offered it. He says:

Placeat tibi, sancta Trinitas, obsequium servitutis meæ; et præsta; ut sacrificium, quod oculis tuæ Majestatis indignus obtuli, tibi sit acceptabile, mihique, et omnibus, pro quibus illud obtuli, sit, te miserante, propitiabile. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

O holy Trinity, let the performance of my homage be pleasing to Thee; and grant that the sacrifice which I, unworthy, have offered up in the sight of Thy Majesty, may be acceptable to Thee, and through Thy mercy be a propitiation for me, and all those for Thom I have offered it. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Look back at the prayer which the priest said at the oblation when offering up the Host. You will see how much alike the two are.

This prayer was often said privately by the celebrant, and is to be found in many old Missals, but it was not made definitely a part of the Mass until the time of Pope Pius V.

Having finished the prayer, the priest kisses the altar, turns to the people, places his left hand on his breast, and with his right makes

over them in blessing the Sign of the Cross, saying:

AT THE BLESSING.

Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus, Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus sanctus. *R.* Amen.	May Almighty God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless you. *R.* Amen.

Like the prayer which goes before and the Gospel which follows, this blessing originally formed no part of the Mass. There had been a blessing given by the Bishop before Communion. Gradually the place of this was moved to the end when Mass was over. At first a simple priest never gave this solemn blessing. Later, when he began to do so, he blessed the people with some sacred object—a cross, a chalice, or a paten. The Bishop blessed with his hand. No blessing is given at a Requiem Mass even to this day. We should receive the blessing with special devotion. We can, if we like, imagine ourselves as receiving from our Lord the blessing which he gave as He ascended into heaven.

When a priest is ordained, the Bishop consecrates his hands with the sacred chrism and says: "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to consecrate and sanctify these hands by this anointing and our benediction, that whatever they bless may be blessed, and whatever they shall consecrate may be consecrated in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Because of his ordination and this solemn

prayer of the Church, a priest's blessing has very special efficacy when we receive it reverently. The priest stands in the place of our divine Lord Himself, and blesses us in His name. This is true at all times, but is peculiarly so of the blessing at the end of Holy Mass when Jesus is sacramentally present in the heart of His priest.

A priest's blessing is a sacramental, and is never fruitless if our dispositions are right.

CHAPTER XXXVI

FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH

THE Gospel of St. John is the very last addition to the Mass, though the faithful from the earliest ages have held this page of Holy Scripture in deepest veneration. St. Augustine mentions a man who wished that it might be written in letters of gold and hung in every church. Many Christians carried it upon their persons. It was read in some places over those just baptised, over the sick, and placed in the coffins of the dead, but it did not form a part of Holy Mass. In order to have it read after Mass, so great was their devotion, many people in founding Mass made this a special condition.

It was once more the Dominican Pope, Pius V., who caused it to be put into every Missal and ordered every priest to say it at Mass.

It is the proper Gospel for the third Mass of Christmas Day.

The priest goes to the Gospel side of the altar and says for the last time: "Dominus vobiscum."

Then, tracing the Sign of the Cross upon the altar, he signs his forehead, lips, and heart, saying:

P. Initium sancti Evangelii secundum Joannem.	*P.* The beginning of the holy Gospel according to St. John.
R. Gloria tibi Domine.	*R.* Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Hoc erat in principio apud Deum. Omnia per ipsum facta sunt: et sine ipso factum est nihil, quod factum est: in ipso vita erat, et vita erat lux hominum: et lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebræ eam non comprehenderunt. Fuit homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Joannes. Hic venit in testimonium ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine, ut omnes crederent per illum. Non erat ille lux, sed ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine. Erat lux vera, quæ illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum. In mundo erat, et mundus per ipsum factus est, et mundus eum non cognovit. In propria venit, et sui eum non receperunt. Quotquot autem receperunt eum, dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, his, qui credunt in nomine ejus: qui non ex sanguinibus, neque ex voluntate carnis, neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo nati sunt. Et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis: et vidimus gloriam

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made: in Him was life, and the Life was the light of men: and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to give testimony of the Light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the Light, but came to give testimony of the Light. He was the true Light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God: to those that believe in His Name, who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of

ejus, gloriam quasi Unigeniti, a Patre, plenum gratiæ et veritatis.

man, but of God. AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

R. Deo gratias.

R. Thanks be to God.

Even now, this Gospel is not printed in the Ordinary of the Mass in a Dominican Missal, but only in the proper place of Christmas Day.

The priest is turned slightly towards the people while reading this from the altar card.

Sometimes another Gospel is read instead of this from St. John. For example, when on a Sunday some feast is kept, then the first Gospel is that of the feast, and the last, that of the Sunday.

The priest does not kiss the Missal at the end.

You would probably like to ask, Why this Gospel rather than any other? Pope Benedict XIV., in answering this very question, says, "Because it is the summary of our belief, reviewing the mysteries of the Trinity, of Creation, and of the Incarnation." It brings to our mind nearly every dear and tender thing in our religion; the things we love best of all. That we are God's, His very own. He made us, and not we ourselves. He is our life and light. In Him we live and move and are. It brings to mind that sad welcome of the first Christmas night when there was no room for

Him in His own world. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

It makes us think of the joy, and love, and intimate friendship of our Communions. As many as received Him to them He gave power to become the sons of God.

Our Mother Mary, the Angel Gabriel, the first Christmas, the first Mass all crowd into those few words: "And the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us." No wonder we kneel when they are said!

Verbum caro, panem verum,	Word made Flesh, the bread of nature
Verbo carnem efficit:	By His Word to Flesh He turns,
Fitque sanguis Christi merum	Wine into His Blood He changes
Et si sensus deficit,	What though sense no change discerns?
Ad firmandum cor sincerum	Only be the heart in earnest,
Sola fides sufficit.	Faith her lesson quickly learns.

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